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VOL. I, NO. 3: DECEMBER 1961

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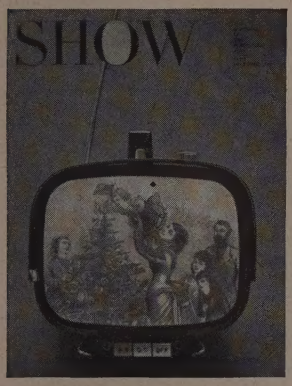

4 Sideshow: Offbeat byways of the arts

6 Criticism and Comment
Theater: John Crosby
Movies: Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
Records for Christmas: Herbert Kupferberg, Leonard Feather, Douglas Watt, Selma Gordon
Television: Brock Brower

17 Previews: The best of the month

42 SHOW's Christmas

43 The Masks of Comedy and Tragedy
Photographed by Melvin Sokolsky

45 "Acte," or "The Prisoners of Time"
A new play in three acts by Lawrence Durrell, with an introduction by the author

56 Let Nothing You Dismay by Walt Kelly

60 Carroll Baker: Free Agent by Donald W. LaBadie
Photographed by Toni Frissell

62 42nd Street—How It Got That Way by Gay Talese
Photographed by Robert Frank

72 Double Exposure
Photographed by Ronnie Burg and Norman Parkinson

74 The Trouble With Tenors by Harold C. Schonberg

76 One, Two, Three Wilder Photographed by Gjon Mili

80 The Real Ernie Kovacs IS Standing Up
by Richard Schickel

84 Dateline: Cuba—the Other Revolution
Photographed by Bruce Davidson

92 The Lost Art of Conversation by Burton Bernstein

94 Calendar

106 The Toronto Scene by Mordecai Richler

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SIDESHOW

On Dubbing

Dubbing, or the art of turning the dialogue of foreign films into spoken English, is here to stay, no matter how strenuous the critical objections remain. It is also fairly big business, as Lee Kresel of the Titra Dubbing Corporation in New York recently stated. Mr. Kresel, who is an ex-actor, takes charge of the dubbing problem for his company, from translation right through casting and direction. One film he dubbed two years ago, "Nude in a White Car," played about two thousand dates across the country in his version, as against five in the original subtitled version.

When a film is sent to Kresel for dubbing, it is accompanied by a copy of the original European script and a literal translation in English. The latter, of course, is for convenience' sake only; there is too much disparity between the syntaxes of languages for it to be of much practical use.

As soon as the film is received, Kresel runs each scene over and over with the literal translation right in front of him. Then he tries to find new words that will retain the meaning of the original script while fitting the lip movements of the actors on the screen. This is painstaking and sometimes inexact work, for the illusion of synchronized lip movement must occasionally be sacrificed for clarity of meaning.

When Kresel has finished redoing a script with new dialogue, the picture itself is cut in ten- to thirty-foot strips, each of which contains a few lines of dialogue. These short sequences are fed into a machine that throws them on the screen over and over as actors work to synchronize the original lip movements with the new dialogue. Once synchronization is achieved, Kresel, as director, must see to it that the voices sound true to the characters in the picture.

Kresel has two criteria for successful dubbers: they must prove that they can synchronize their own lip movements with another's, and they must still sound alive. Auditions for Titra dubbing actors take place twice a year; out of a hundred and seventy-five who tried out last year, eight were selected. The problem is that almost all of them unconsciously project themselves into the parts; give them a chance to dub and they turn themselves on and sparkle. The work, then, must be completely impersonal. For doing it, though, actors get $100 a day; if they dub two voices in a film, the pay, of course, increases. It's a handy way to pick up extra money. Even Sophia Loren has a go at it from time to time. Not too long ago she dubbed the English version of her own Italian film "Two Women" at Titra, and turned out to be one of the all-time great lip synchronizers.

JACK GABRIEL

Relics of the Met

Ever since the Metropolitan Opera informed the public that the noble structure which has served it for nearly eighty seasons will be torn down after the company's removal to Lincoln Center, the Met's business office has been receiving letters like this: "Dear Sir: As a devoted member of your audience for over thirty years, may I be the first to be informed of how I may purchase those carriage lights on the Thirty-ninth Street side. . . ." Other queries concern the gold curtain, box seats, and box fronts; several museums have even put in bids for entire boxes.

Anthony A. Bliss, president of the Metropolitan Opera Association, has also had his share of inquiries. "In fact," the urbane lawyer said, "I was rather startled by one letter from a lady in Nevada. It started with a bang: 'Dear Mr. Bliss: I own an opera house. . . .' "

The opera house proved to be in Virginia City, and the enterprising lady, who had obviously done quite a bit of research on her subject, wanted to buy the chairs from those boxes which had originally been owned by families whose fortunes had come from the Comstock Lode.

Evidently, the letter-writers are familiar with the way the Metropolitan has unloaded house property in the past. Perhaps many remember the time in 1940 when Mrs. August Belmont, founder and now president emeritus of the Metropolitan Opera Guild, parceled out the original great gold curtain, a venerable hanging which made its first appearance in 1905. Mrs. Belmont had heard that the managers of the Metropolitan planned to dispose of the old curtain by selling it for $100 to a motion picture house. Aroused by this lack of sound business judgment, Mrs. Belmont bought the curtain herself and had the several tons of brocade cleaned and carted to the roof stage. There, workmen cut it into swatches which were later sold to the public by the yard or made into bookmarks and eyeglass cases; at a dollar a portion, the Guild cleared almost $12,000 on this transaction—twice the original price of the curtain. In 1953, Rudolf Bing renovated part of the House and reseated the orchestra floor. At this time, three rows of seats were removed from the front of the floor and sold to interested private parties. John Chapman, drama critic of the *Daily News,* snagged two on the aisle, and Francis Robinson, head of Metropolitan public relations, tells of a New Mexico couple who listen to the Saturday afternoon opera broadcasts at home from the vantage point of their red plush "orchestra" seats. This "largesse" on the part of the management has led many to hope that the public will again be permitted to bid for shares of the spoils before bulldozers reduce the Metropolitan to rubble.

Will it? Denizens of the business office mutter that such questions are premature: "We've got other things to think about. After all, we're not moving for three years." In a slightly mellower tone, however, they add, "If there is any such sale, those people who've written us letters will be given consideration."

Mr. Bliss has also termed these questions "too early," but admits that at a recent meeting of the Metropolitan Opera Association, plans for a special committee were drawn up and members appointed. "We don't quite know what we're going to call the committee yet," Mr. Bliss explained. "We've toyed with titles such as Disposition-of-Furnishings-of-Old-Opera-House Committee, or Gold-Curtain Committee. Naturally, the autographed letters, the famed portraits of Chaliapin, Pinza, and the rest, the busts, and the cabinet memorabilia will come with us to the new house or to our opera museum. As for the fixtures . . . public auction? We can't say, but . . ."

Meanwhile, hopeful music lovers will no doubt continue to eye the proscenium plaques and masks, the Venetian glass sconces in the Opera Club, the red, velvet-covered walls of Sherry's, the great mirrors, the mighty center chandelier, and even the moldering gilding on Dress Circle arches, with the hope of decorating homes with some cherished operatic token or holding down the bills on their desks with a memorable paperweight.

FLORENCE STEVENSON

Pitchmen

For $10 an hour as members of a class, or for $20 an hour in individual consultation, performers who appear on television as salesmen, at a daily pay scale that starts at $95 and can reach $10,000 with residual benefits, can discover what may be the ultimate secret of their trade: "Learn how to audition successfully and you can get rich."

The man who teaches people to accept this premise is Mr. Charles Kebbe, a tall, informal gentleman who became a teacher after many years in television and advertising. During that time, he was an actor, a director, a producer, and, from 1954 to 1960, the casting director of Ted Bates, Inc., an advertising agency that spends 145 million dollars a year and counsels its clients to sell hard. It was at Bates that Kebbe developed his interest in teaching. "I had to do *some*thing to get talent past the auditions, or we never would have made a commercial," he said genially. "After coaching people for years, and seeing them destroyed at auditions, I finally decided to make my living helping them. I opened this office last year, word got around, and things are going nicely."

Mr. Kebbe works with a handful of lucky disciples in a three-room Manhattan apartment that is furnished functionally. It contains couches, chairs, cue cards, microphones, and tape recorders, and is decorated with such miscellany of the product spokesman's trade as Giant Family-size detergent boxes, thirty-two-ounce cans designed for Super-quarts of motor oil, small mounds of Whitest-White dish towels, and an assortment of Handy Jumbo Free Gift Envelopes containing combs for the entire family.

"All my students are pros at this business," Mr. Kebbe said. "They've done anywhere from half a dozen to hundreds of commercials, and most of them were actors before they ever tried to make a buck as product spokesmen. Yet you'd be astonished at how little they know about auditioning, and at how easy they are to bruise. Like all performers, they're introverts in an extraverted world. They're hiding out as actors. As spokesmen, though, they have to read copy. They can't hide in a character, because there's no character except themselves. It's a very real problem.

"They walk into an audition—a job interview is all *that* is—and what happens? They see six bald men staring at them. They feel absolutely naked on the stage. Somebody hands them a piece of paper with some words about onion breath, or some garbage for dogs that cats can't resist, and says, 'Read.' No place to hide there. They read, somebody says, 'Terrible,' and suddenly they're no longer just out in the open; they're all cut up, lacerated, questioning themselves. Who wouldn't be?

"What the performers don't know is that the guys auditioning them act that way because they have no idea what they want, even in the rare case when it walks up and hits 'em in the face. On top of that, there's so much money hanging on every decision that each of them is sitting there with only one thought in mind: Let somebody else decide, not me. I'll give you an example. In my seven years at Bates, I could never actually hire talent, but I could sure keep a lot of people from *being* hired. All I ever had to do was say, 'I dunno,' when I was asked for an opinion."

To prepare his students for the audition trauma, Kebbe has worked out three types of courses. One is a basic class for relative newcomers to the spokesman business; another is a workshop for more advanced students; and the third is consultation for the most advanced students of all, who are, usually, busy professionals. Most of the time in all the courses is devoted to reading commercials and criticizing the readings. "I try to get my people to view a commercial as a piece of literature. That's a dangerous word, 'literature.' You have to be careful with it. I want them to understand that commercials aren't about products, but about human problems that the products are supposed to help solve—bad breath, armpit odor, lousy cooking, laziness. This is one reason for the current trend toward spokesmen who look ordinary—like *people,* in other words, and therefore subject to the problems of people.

"Most commercials are badly written and dull. To make them meaningful, I try to get my people to bring their own experience to reading them. 'If you're selling Grannie's Frozen Apple Pie,' I keep saying, 'don't think of the leathery piece of junk you're selling. Think of a marvelous experience and put *that* into your pitch.' It sounds like the Actors' Studio, doesn't it? The truth is, I don't really have it well worked out, and I never know what's going to happen when I see my students, as you'll see if you come to one of the workshops."

The four relatively advanced students who assembled for the workshop turned out to be far from ordinary-looking. In one armchair sat a gorgeous, willowy brunette. Near her was a gorgeous, willowy blonde. Both had model's cases tucked under their chairs. Across the room sat a stunningly handsome blonde matron, and down the room from her was a slender, dark-haired man, dressed in Ivy League clothes. All were immediately recognizable by any product-spokesman buff.

Class started promptly at six P.M. Kebbe advised the students that they would be doing a motor-oil commercial that evening, and passed out identical slips of paper on which was typewritten:

Product: Jumbo Quart Motor Oil.

1. *A new name in Motor Oils.*
2. *And the difference is in the ingredients.*
3. *Guaranteed to keep motors carbon-free for the life of your car.*

Slogan: Carbon-free as a car can be.

"Let's take ten minutes to write a commercial based on these points and end with the slogan," Kebbe said. "Does everybody have a pencil? Then let's get started, unless there are any questions."

"Can I leave early tonight?" asked the blonde model.

"Yes," said Kebbe.

"What's a motor oil?" asked the brunette.

"The kind of oil you fry cars in," answered the Ivy League man.

"Oh, for goodness' sake!" said the stunning matron.

"For those of you who don't know what motor oil is," said Kebbe, patiently, "a motor has many moving parts in it. Oil is used to prevent friction. It's that simple."

There followed ten minutes of pencil chewing, interrupted only by sighs, squirms, one request to shut off the air conditioner and another to leave it alone. Finally Kebbe asked, "Shall we read? Who wants to be first?"

Starting with the matron, the students stood and read into a microphone that fed a tape recorder, sitting down to generous, soul-building cries of "Swell!" and "Where did you get that great bit about *sludge?*" and "I *loved* that *life*time guarantee!" Later, one by one, their efforts were played back.

"I was carried away," said the gorgeous blonde, as her voice came over the tape. "I just wrote all kinds of lies. Is that what copywriters do?"

"Sometimes," said Kebbe, with a shrug.

"I was *bad,* wasn't I?"

"You said it first," Kebbe answered hesitantly. "Now I'm going to get a *real* motor-oil commercial," he continued, "and this time let's *think* of something while we're talking and put something *into* what we say."

ARTHUR WHITMAN

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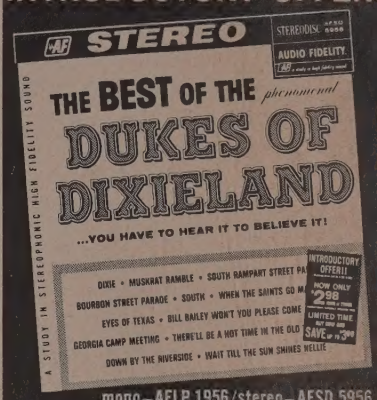
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CRITICISM & COMMENT

Theater: Revues on the Fringe

by John Crosby

The lights go up, and there is Peter Cook, one of the four marvelously gifted and extraordinary young men who make up the entire cast of "Beyond the Fringe." He is standing next to an imaginary globe which presently becomes very real, and he seems terribly limp and preposterously British. Without preamble, he launches into a political tirade, and even to me, a non-Briton, he is the very living image of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.

"It's very easy to sneer but it's a jolly sight harder to build the things at which to sneer," he drawls in faultless Oxonian.

"Beyond the Fringe," the biggest hit London has had in years, is a four-man, no-woman, hardly-any-music, and almost-no-scenery revue. All its four participants are enormously gifted, literate, and intelligent amateurs who provide all their own material and who have—or, at least, once had—no theatrical ambitions. Probably the most brilliant of its four participants is Jonathan Miller, a doctor in the daytime, who is six foot, three inches tall, has a face like a koala bear, a very agile mind, and a brilliantly inventive body. Then there's Dudley Moore, who plays piano like a madman and looks malevolent, like Andrei Gromyko; and Alan Bennett, who rather resembles an owl.

Early in the proceedings there's a skit called "Royal Box," which tears savagely away at the whole concept of the Royal Family attending the theater. Mr. Moore, it develops, has seen nine hundred and fifty-six performances of a show he loathes, in hopes of catching a glimpse of the members of the Royal Family, who never show up. "Unless they're crouching back there—but then they wouldn't be Royal, would they?" You can hardly get any more irreverent than that—not in England. But wait!

The very next sketch is "Man Bites God," in which Jonathan Miller plays a folksy vicar on television who says things like: "I think we must get away from that old idea of thinking of God as Divine." And: "I think we're putting words in God's mouth here."

You can't reproduce in print the terribly hip, biting satire these four young men (their combined age is under a hundred) play. When the evening is done, there's hardly a sacred cow left. They have undermined Lord Beaverbrook and the British press; World War II, and especially all that stiff-upper-lip drama; Beethoven; black African nationalists; even the hydrogen bomb and the Establishment. Swift, savage, and uncompromising—that's what "Beyond the Fringe" is. After all, why should any of these young men compromise?

When was the last time I saw anything so uncompromising on Broadway? Well, back when I was one-and-twenty, Clifton Webb was on Broadway in a confection by Moss Hart and Irving Berlin called "As Thousands Cheer," and to my dying day I'll never forget Mr. Webb playing John D. Rockefeller, Sr., wrinkles and all, chasing John D., Jr., off the stage with a carving knife for building Radio City in the middle of the Depression. Then there was Miss Marilyn Miller playing Barbara Hutton catching a husband, and playing Joan Crawford stealing scenes from Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. (also played by Mr. Webb). Mr. Webb was fearfully funny as Mahatma Gandhi, a sacrosanct figure of the day. "Obscene in its severity," commented Mr. Percy Hammond in the *Herald Tribune*.

But that was a long time ago, and there hasn't been much irreverence in the musical theater in years. Now what have we? Well, "Camelot." Seven hundred thousand dollars worth of—well, mostly scenery and costumes. Or let's consider "The Sound of Music," which is a chocolate marshmallow sundae with Mary Martin, a Rodgers-and-Hammerstein score, and a story line mingling children and nuns, two sure-fire ingredients for the "Reader's Digest" trade.

Today the musical theater in Manhattan is Radio City Music Hall for the affluent. You have to stand in line forever for a ticket (six months, sometimes), but the seats are restful, once you get in. The scenery and costumes are gorgeous, the music and staging are marvelous, and there isn't a laugh in the script.

Make fun of the Establishment! My dear fellow, Broadway *is* the Establishment. Broadway is in the hands of big businessmen like Roger Stevens, Leland Hayward, and David Merrick, who don't feel at all comfortable taking pot shots at sacred cows, because they rather tend to be sacred cows themselves. The backers who put up the six-figure fortunes to finance these things are largely made up of sacrosanct bovines; and, let's face it, the audience — rich, respectable, middle-aged—is filled with the same kind of people.

Great as the greatest of our musicals were, there wasn't a message in any of them that would upset Barry Goldwater. "The King and I" brought a touch of democracy to Siam. (Even in Arizona they have democracy.) "Carousel" celebrated the nostalgia of fish-fry days in old New England. The greatest of all, "My Fair Lady," is—as its creator, George Bernard Shaw, was the first to point out—nothing but a Cinderella story. A good one, but still . . .

It looked for a while as if the bracing forces of malevolence had been permanently routed from Broadway by the forces of sweetness and light. But hark . . . I hear a footstep.

Back in 1956, under the pavement of Manhattan—where else to start an underground movement but underground?—Julius Monk operated a raffish saloon called the Downstairs. You entered by kiosk, and many wandered in under the impression they were catching the subway. There Miss Dody Goodman, later to win fame on Jack Paar's program, joyously satirized all of Tennessee Williams' heroines in one fell swoop. The rest of the cast took on the whole international set, Elsa Maxwell and all.

Meanwhile, out in Chicago, a group of brilliant, neurotic, and unfettered youngsters gathered together in 1955 at the Compass tavern and did improvised sketches which were topical, immediate, fresh as the morning air, about local events, some of them right out of the newspaper. This amorphous undertaking eventually crystallized into an irreverent revue called "The Second City" which ran for years, off and on, in Chicago.

Two of "Second City's" alumni were Elaine May and Mike Nichols, who eventually migrated East. I first saw them far in the bowels of the earth in a place called the Den, where, among other things, they did some delicate and vicious lampoons of

Dazzling... Gems By Mancini

Henry Mancini, that prolific "Peter Gunn" man, has devised a stunning, sexy and sophisticated score for the new film, "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

The twelve shimmering segments, as arranged and conducted by Mancini, are splashed with every color in the rainbow! Live it up. Enjoy "Breakfast at Tiffany's" soon. In Living Stereo and Monaural Hi-Fi on RCA VICTOR

The most trusted name in sound

some of the mahatmas in the world of literature—some of the sacredest of sacred cows are in that pasture—like Eliot, Faulkner, and Joyce.

Another alumnus of the Compass to break away like an amoeba was Ted Flicker, who went to St. Louis and started a hugely successful group, the Compass Players, at the Crystal Palace. Part of this group then emigrated to Greenwich Village in New York, where their revue took root under the name "The Premise." It has just celebrated its first anniversary, and I went back to see it for the fourth time.

The Premise players improvise skits, blackouts, and sketches right out of the headlines about such topics as Red China, the John Birch Society, the Congo, the Kennedy family, Mayor Wagner—well, you name it. As a matter of fact, that's just what you do if you are a member of the audience. Flicker asks for suggestions, and the audiences sing out suggestions from that day's news. The night I was there was the night Syria revolted against Nasser, and the Premise players did a little skit that was paralyzingly funny. The fresher the news, the funnier the skit.

Premise players are especially murderous on Mayor Wagner, New York's reluctant dragon. In this bit, a reporter exultantly tells Wagner he has ended Tammany bossism; the city is his to rule as he sees fit; the responsibility and the decisions are all his. As the reporter says all this, Wagner's face shows concern, dismay, horror at what he has done. At their best, these are marvelous editorial expressions of opinion, some of them freer and more lucid and certainly more liberal than you'll find in your local newspaper. Their skit about the nonrecognition of Red China says more in a few words than a thousand editorials.

Over at Mr. Monk's present establishment, Upstairs at the Downstairs, where the satire is usually done in rhyme, they score a direct hit on the John Birch Society with a bit of doggerel some of which goes: "If Mommy is a Commie, then you've got to turn her in." Another line: "We take the name of everyone turning left." The Upstairs players also sing gaily of the school scandals in New York, sick comedians, the Peace Corps, the stock market, plane hijacking, and the hostility of the neutral nations to the United States and their persistent friendliness toward Russia. ("When it comes to the end of the world, everybody wants to run with the winner.")

I notice that in all these places —"The Premise," "Beyond the Fringe," Upstairs at the Downstairs, and "Second City" — the grimmest subjects bring out the wildest flights of imagination. Three of them have sketches about the end of the world. In "The Premise," for example, they have a sketch about a fallout-shelter salesman who says: "I can arrange time payments. Not too long!" In "Beyond the Fringe," Jonathan Miller is screechingly funny at a civil defense meeting. Speaking of the hydrogen bomb, he airily advises his audience: "Get out of the area. If you're in the area, you're well in it. If you're out of it, you're well out of it."

Fearlessness—in approach, in subject matter, and in execution —is what makes all these satirists so fresh and exciting. Actually, "From the Second City" was a disappointment to me because I thought some of the material was not as new as it ought to be. I rather suspect they are sticking too long with skits that were once successful. It is the utmost in daring to walk out before an audience and attempt to improvise in the first place. When these players succeed, they succeed big. When they fall flat, and they sometimes do, they are awful.

Success spoils both the players and the material. For instance, Elaine May and Mike Nichols, when they were still at the Compass, improvised a delightfully fresh and innocent skit about a couple of teen-age kids necking in the back seat of a car. I first saw it far underground at the Den and later when they moved up to street level at the Blue Angel. Then they played it on Broadway. Somewhere along the way, the sketch has broadened and coarsened. It's quite dirty now, and they play the sniggers for all they're worth. This reflects in part the changes in their audiences, from the bright, eager youngsters they played to in Chicago to the half-asleep, half-loaded benefit audiences they played to on Broadway. But really, I don't think they should play to that kind of audience.

Also—and this is a three-act play in itself—it indicates some of the changes that are taking place in Nichols and May. They started out taking pot shots at the sacred cows and now, after five years of solid success, they are in terrible danger of becoming one.

This is the history of show business. You start throwing snowballs at silk hats and wind up wearing one. Moss Hart had a funny sketch about Noel Coward in "As Thousands Cheer," but Noel is a good friend now and, really, you don't feel like throwing snowballs at your friends, do you?

Princess Margaret attended "Beyond the Fringe" not too long ago, and I suppose the Queen will get there too, eventually. And then it won't be long before the four young men will have second thoughts about using the Royal Family as comedy material. After all, they *are* Royal and one should have respect, shouldn't one?

Movies: Judgment at Nuremberg

by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Stanley Kramer's "Judgment at Nuremberg," which will surely be one of the most debated films of the winter, raises the old question of the extent to which movies serve as a medium for intelligent discussion of complicated problems. It is a powerful film, carefully wrought, soberly written, ably acted. It raises issues of great seriousness. It handles these issues with dignity and passion. Yet its impact is that of a brilliant but confused polemic. It has the raw force of an eloquent pamphlet without clear direction or logical conclusion.

It is a story of the year when the second World War finally gave way to anticipations of the third. We are in Nuremberg in 1948. The great international trials of Nazi war criminals have long since come to an end. Now a United States military tribunal is cleaning up its books, wearily presenting civilization's case against a collection of minor Nazi functionaries. Four judges are on trial. The prosecutor, an intense, young, and liberal colonel, is determined to use their transgressions in order to indict the whole Nazi system of justice. The lawyer for the defense, a young German nationalist, is determined to justify their actions in order to vindicate the whole idea of German patriotism. A judge from the state of Maine, defeated for re-election, is brought to Nuremberg to preside over the trial. There are ominous background noises: the Communists taking over in Czechoslovakia, the suicide of Masaryk.

The film concentrates mostly on the trial itself. The four defendants represent Central Casting's idea of standard Nazi types: the vicious sadist, the sly opportunist, the time-serving bureaucrat, and the arrogant *Junker*. The lawyers interrupt each other in the courtroom; witnesses support the prosecution's case and are then torn apart by the defense; the judges wrangle among themselves; the chief judge from Maine begins to soak up the ambiguities of the Nuremberg process. Finally, one of the defendants, overcome by guilt, turns on his own lawyer and endorses the prosecution's case.

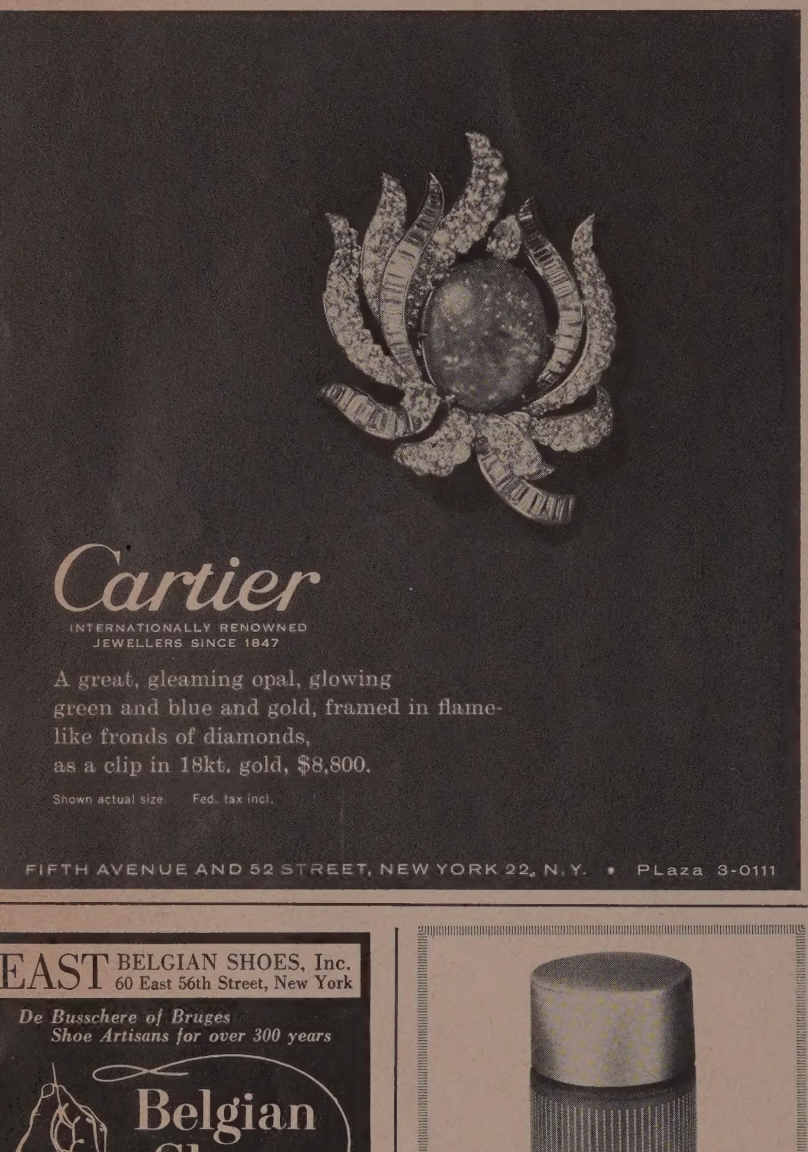
In the meantime, as the trial drags on, the Communists begin the blockade of Berlin. It suddenly seems urgent to win the Germans to the side of the West. The American general tells the prosecutor to let up, not to demand heavy sentences for the defendants. But the Yankee judge, in the name of impartial justice, sentences all to life imprisonment. The defense lawyer tells him that in five years they will all be free. A statement flashes on the screen: "The Nuremberg Trials, held in the American zone, ended July 14, 1949. There were ninety-nine defendants sentenced to prison terms. Not one is still serving his sentence." Fade-out, to the accompaniment of Nazi marching songs.

As a work of art, "Judgment at Nuremberg" has its points. Stanley Kramer remains an exceedingly able director. He whirls the camera around the courtroom in an ingenious and generally successful effort to relieve the tedium of the trial format. He resists the temptation to use flashbacks, that hopeless cliché of the courtroom drama. Indeed, restraint marks the whole movie after the clumsiness of the first quarter-hour; we hear the voice of Hitler but never see his face, and the single departure from this restraint—the sequence of concentration camp shots—is wholly justified.

Kramer also gets remarkable results from his actors. Montgomery Clift and Judy Garland, as two of the witnesses, and Burt Lancaster, as a defendant, far surpass anything I have ever seen any of them do before. As the two lawyers, Richard Widmark (for the prosecution) and Maximilian Schell (for the defense) offer brilliant but showy performances. They give the parts almost too much; one feels not only a duel of lawyers but a duel of actors. Still, they are marvelously effective. As the down-East judge, Spencer Tracy is supposedly the granite face of Yankee justice. Unfortunately, he does not suggest that he has been any nearer Bangor than Bridgeport, Connecticut; but his performance is strong and, as usual, falls just short of intolerable self-righteousness. Marlene Dietrich, alas, is wasted in an undefined role.

But the controversy about "Judgment at Nuremberg" will not be over its artistic quality. It will be over its political purpose and responsibility. The movie raises two fundamental issues: Can justice exist between victor and vanquished?—and, When a nation runs amuck, where does accountability for its crimes begin and end? To the first question, the film's answer is a resolute yes, ratified by the weather-beaten face of old Judge Tracy. To the second, the answer is a morass of confusion and contradiction. It is not fair to criticize "Judgment at Nuremberg" for failing to solve problems which will torment moral philosophers for a long time to come. Yet, even accepting its own assumptions, one is surely justified in expecting a certain consistency about the impressions it is trying to leave in its audience's mind.

We really do not know what Kramer wants us to think about the question of German guilt. Take a concrete point: Did the German people know about the horrors of the concentration camps? Most of the time, their professions of ignorance are treated with ironic derision. Then it suddenly becomes unclear whether even the defendants knew these horrors; one of them has to be convinced by the grisly technological exposition of a fellow prisoner before he will believe that the mass murders were technically feasible. In another scene, the prosecutor seeks to discredit a witness by showing that she was a member of the Nazi party. Yet it turns out that her testimony was true, which leaves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one baffled by the dramatic (or juridical) point of exposing her Nazism. And in an impressive scene, the defense lawyer attempts to turn the war-guilt argument against the victors, against the Communists, the British appeasers, the American industrialists who rearmed Hitler —a passage which goes unrebutted for the rest of the film.

What effect is the film supposed to create? Some may argue that its point is precisely to establish the confusion of the war-guilt question. Yet, if so, why the conclusion, with its clear implication that the Nuremberg defendants were guilty men who ought still to be in prison? One cannot escape the impression that the argument of the film was not thought through with much rigor —and also that beneath the argument an anti-Nazi intention kept spilling over into plain anti-Germanism; the good Germans seem somehow less German than the bad Germans. The defense lawyer operates, not as an attorney appointed to save a client, but as a sinister expression of neo-Nazi revival. From the first moment, the movie uses images of arrogance and servility—the German blasting his horn while pedestrians obediently scurry from the road—to characterize the German scene. Of course, Germans do show special tendencies toward arrogance and servility. But the cross-purposes of exposition and imagery suggest that the film emerged out of an unresolved tangle of ideas and emotions. With all its power, it ends as no more than a pamphlet.

One can compare "Judgment at Nuremberg" with another recent attempt at seriousness in the movies—Robert Rossen's "The Hustler." This is a taut and vivid movie about a young man who aspires to eminence as a pool shark. It is a first-rate melodrama, with splendid contributions by George C. Scott as a gambler, Jackie Gleason as a pool champion, and with a beautifully catatonic performance by Piper Laurie as the hero's self-destructive girl. Unfortunately, it tries to be much more than a melodrama. Rossen sees his poolroom hustler as a figure in a parable of profound moral significance. Paul Newman, who plays the hero well into the ground, abets this misguided concept. Balancing back and forth on the balls of his feet, a self-satisfied smile flickering across his face, he makes Widmark and Schell of the Nuremberg picture seem austere and taciturn performers. I cannot remember a more embarrassing scene in recent movies than the one in which Newman explains the deeper aesthetic and spiritual fulfillments of pool-playing to a bemused Miss Laurie.

No one wants the movies to renounce seriousness. But let those who make them remember that films become serious through images, not through arguments.

1961 Recordings: Preferred Lists

Classical

by Herbert Kupferberg

Records are all of the same shape, and mostly of the same size, weight, and chemical composition. Beyond this, few devices known to man offer a greater variety of range or content—which undoubtedly accounts for their usefulness and convenience as Christmas presents.

If, for example, among the outstanding records of 1961 you desired to present to some worthy and cherished recipient (yourself, for instance) the most lavish, handsome, and musically imposing album of the year, you might well select the eight-record Angel set of the Beethoven Nine Symphonies, played with rugged strength and luminous lyricism by Otto Klemperer and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London—a compendium of great achievements by a great conductor.

A bit more modest in size and scope, but no less authentic in its interpretive musicianship, is George Szell's Epic set in which, with the Cleveland Orchestra and pianist Leon Fleisher, he puts together the tidiest Schumann package ever assembled—the four symphonies, the piano concerto, and the "Manfred" overture. For those whose tastes run more toward the modern, Igor Stravinsky obliges, via Columbia, with a handsome album, bound in transparent plastic, containing his own interpretations of his "Sacre du Printemps" and "Petrouchka," and including a record upon which he talks, in his uniquely Russian-French accent, of his own life, work, and outlook. This is living history, and also living music, an embellishment to more than one Christmas.

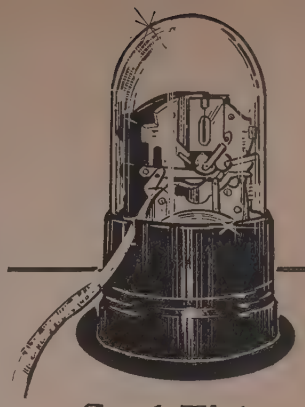
More albums: Verdi's "Otello" was *the* operatic arrival of the year, with not one but two eagerly awaited productions, by London and by Victor. They were released simultaneously this fall, stirring comparisons and controversy still unresolved, with partisans to sing the praises of Mario del Monaco and Renata Tebaldi vis-à-vis Jon Vickers and Leonie Rysanek. I hesitate to dampen the holiday spirit by suggesting that neither is up to the musical standard of the Toscanini-directed "Otello" of 1947, so will only note that between the 1961 contenders, Del Monaco–London seems a slightly starrier holiday adornment than Vickers–Victor.

Other operatic packages that can be commended at Christmas as well as at any other tide include new stereo excursions by two Figaros—Mozart's and Rossini's. From Angel comes a sparkling "Marriage of Figaro" with Giuseppe Taddei and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, and from Deutsche Grammophon—a most unlikely source for this most Italianate of comic operas—comes a "Barber of Seville" that, thanks to Bruno Bartoletti's crisp conducting, adds flavor and freshness to a piece that is too often conventionalized to death. And while Wagnerians on your gift list cannot look for the treasures of seasons past (the Rheingold vein of two years ago seems to be temporarily exhausted), they can surely find some solace in a generally solid and fine-sounding "Flying Dutchman" from RCA Victor, in which George London, Leonie Rysanek, and Giorgio Tozzi more often than not sing with eloquence and power.

Does your album-seeker seek words rather than music? If so, he may welcome, and even thank you for, a new Shakespearean production—a "Hamlet" from London Records that is complete, uncut, clearly spoken, and remarkably youthful-sounding, too. London, which expects to have all thirty-eight of Shakespeare's plays on discs by 1964, the quatercentenary of his birth, employs actors affiliated with the Marlowe Society of Cambridge University—actors whose excellence is unimpaired by their anonymity. Another, somewhat less pretentious but still quite proficient, Shakespeare presentation is "The Tempest," a Dublin Gate Theater production on the Spoken Word label that catches much of the magic, mood, and music of this sea-drenched poetic fantasy.

To choose among the year's shiniest single records is a task to keep even the most energetic of gift-givers busy. No records are more enticing to the eye as well as the ear than Victor's Soria series, a particularly handsome example being Julian Bream's collection of English lute music, in which sixteen pieces by Elizabethan composers find a perfect visual companion in a brochure illustrated by Skira reproductions from Hans Holbein and other masters. Artur Rubinstein's authoritative performances of two Chopin piano sonatas are similarly accoutered in another Soria album.

Less lavish in their packaging but no less outstanding in their content are four orchestral releases—a sunny coupling of Beethoven's First and Eighth Symphonies by Pierre Monteux (RCA Victor), a lovely Mendelssohn "Scotch" Symphony by Peter Maag (London), a Brahms Second by William Steinberg in luscious stereo sound (Command), and a two-disc, complete Tchaikovsky "Nutcracker" (Artia) emanating from the Bolshoi



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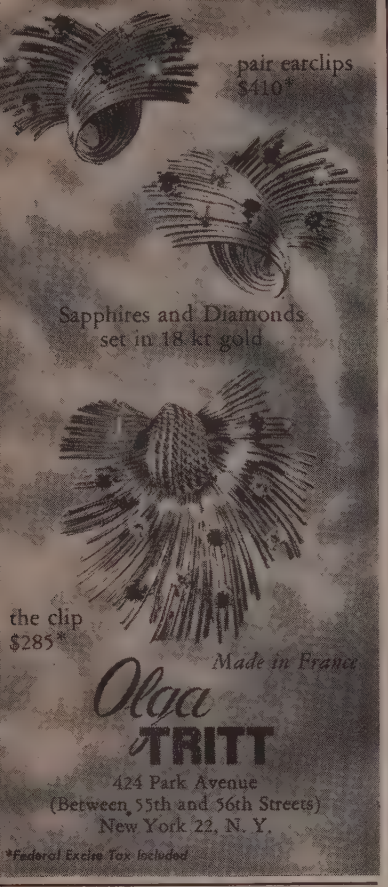

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If your gift list has a chamber music fancier, he might appreciate the perky, saucy "Sextuor" of Francis Poulenc (Columbia), deftly played by the Philadelphia Woodwind Ensemble, the first-desk experts of Mr. Ormandy's orchestra. And surely no collector of vocal rarities will ask for more than a newly reissued collection of arias and songs by Nellie Melba (Angel), unique and incomparable after fifty years.

For the rest, there remains a miscellany to choose from—two oddly contrasting versions of the atmospheric folk songs of the Auvergne, sung by Lucie De Vienne Blanc in their pristine beauty (Folkways), and by Netania Davrath (Vanguard) in their somewhat smoother concert adaptation; a rollicking stereo panorama of the band music of all nations, gathered under the title "Pass in Review" (London); and, finally, a two-disc collection of recorded interviews with elder statesmen of today, gathered under the title of "Wisdom" (Decca)—a commodity surely to be cherished at this season of the year no less than at any other.

Jazz
by Leonard Feather

Not too long ago, the jazzman, closely observed and fully understood by a cadre of fellow musicians, operated in an aesthetic underground, guided only by his instincts and his emotions. Today, hemmed in by a wailing wall of critics and scrutinized by audiences who have been taught to believe in planned obsolescence, he is tempted to view normality as cowardice, contentment as concession, simplicity as stagnation. Persuaded that what is complex is necessarily creative, he races incontinently onward and upward with his art.

A few have achieved meaningful innovations without depending on complexity and provocativeness for their own sakes. The two indispensable characteristics of jazz are improvised solos and a strong rhythmic undercurrent, both offering the kind of pulsation that can only be created by men to whom the jazz tradition is second nature.

Several composers have succeeded in weaving these elements into a richly colored context that involves skillful and vivid orchestration. Two impressive examples are "The Golden Striker: John Lewis Conducts Music for Brass," released just a year ago on Atlantic (SD 1334), and "Out of the Cool" by Gil Evans' orchestra (Impulse A-4). Lewis directs a brass-and-rhythm unit in a deftly linked series of works inspired by characters of the *commedia dell' arte*. Here the intermingling of jazz content and an appropriately baroque style of concert writing has produced a nearly perfect synthesis. Evans' orchestra (six brass, three woodwinds, and rhythm) plays only five selections, all unrelated; one is an overlong treatment of Evans' composition "La Nevada." But an extraordinary variety of tone colors is achieved; Evans' arrangements and the soloists' highly personal statements dovetail ideally.

While Lewis and Evans have brought to bear on their writing an extensive background of academic equipment, the Duke Ellington orchestra, now the world's oldest established permanent floating jazz showcase, has continued to operate in a musical vacuum, unmarked by any real contact with classical orchestration methods, valid and vital as ever in its own unique terms. Columbia (CS 8397) offers, on one side, Ellington's interpretation of "Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 & 2." The mildewed premise of jazzing the classics is relieved of its traditional Hollywood bravura; Grieg's themes are treated as if they had been authentic jazz in the first place. The result is *echt* Ellington at his timeless best. On the other side is "Suite Thursday," by Duke and his perennial collaborator, Billy Strayhorn, supposedly inspired by characters from Steinbeck. Despite the dubious programmatic nature of the music, it provides a reminder of the old axiom that Ellington could probably write a successful work based on a stock report.

The year produced two striking examples of the straightforward modern jazz orchestra, without "third-stream" or concert pretentions and with no apparent object but keeping the beat. They are Terry Gibbs's set on Verve (V6-2151), recorded on location at the Summit in Hollywood, and Gerry Mulligan's Verve album (V6-8396), taped at the Village Vanguard in New York. Each offers solos by the leader and several sidemen that are inventively modern yet never extravagant.

Two important albums offer ambitious new works commissioned by Dizzy Gillespie. "Perceptions," by the fast-maturing composer J. J. Johnson, is played by a twenty-one-piece orchestra conducted by Gunther Schuller on Verve (V6-8411). "Gillespiana," written by Gillespie's pianist, Boris (Lalo) Schifrin, fuses Latin American tonal and rhythmic concepts with jazz in a five-part suite in which the trumpeter's quintet is surrounded by a large brass-and-percussion ensemble (Verve V6-8394).

Since no critic can pretend to have studied all of the several hundred small-combo LP's released in the past year, I will not attempt to pass any arbitrary judgments on the field beyond a general recommendation of almost any of the vigorous quintet performances by the Art Blakey and Horace Silver groups on Blue Note. I was particularly impressed by "Doin' the Thing," recorded by Silver's combo at the Village Gate (Blue Note 4076).

I can think of only one album that has met popular success commensurate with its musical merit. The best-selling, two-volume package "Miles Davis in Person at the Blackhawk, San Francisco" (Columbia C2S 820) offers the most effective presentation to date of Davis' brooding, elliptical trumpet in the company of his limber, hard-swinging quintet. The performances have a quality of concentration and unself-consciousness that probably could never have been achieved by a group improvising in a recording studio.

The best vocal jazz record of the year was not by one singer but by a specially assembled company. "Evolution of the Blues Song" (Columbia CS 8383) is a semidocumentary, written, narrated, and occasionally sung by Jon Hendricks, who introduced it at the 1960 Monterey Jazz Festival. In tracing the path of the blues, it presents two impressive new singers, Hannah Dean and "Big" Miller, as well as the more familiar Jimmy Witherspoon. Though historically debatable, Hendricks' presentation is a rarity in that it brings to a jazz vocal album a logical idea, a sense of continuity, and a well-sustained mood.

The compilation of a best-records list involves a long process of elimination. Far simpler is the job of assessing the year's worst products. In terms of unfulfilled expectations, one need go no further than the recent Roulette LP that brought together Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington in the most abortive summit meeting since Khrushchev's with Eisenhower. In terms of musicianship, the project most hopelessly doomed from the outset was Ornette Coleman's investment in a double-quartet session on Atlantic. Confusion twice confounded, as Mr. Coleman and his conspirators agonizingly demonstrate, leads only to double disaster.

Popular
by Douglas Watt

The year produced no more spectacular popular recording than Judy Garland's spring concert at Carnegie Hall. It captured the clamorous love affair between the entertainer and her public at flood tide, engaging the home listener in a noisy, carnival atmosphere that you may find yourself resisting. The audience,

itself tuned to concert pitch, obscures the beginnings of numbers with its cheering as it recognizes the songs (it goes so far as to cheer its idol even for random pieces that have never been associated with her); the drums and cymbals in the forty-piece orchestra clatter and thump resoundingly as Miss Garland, after a gently sung phrase or two, prepares to let loose; and when she does let go, to bawl with fervor, she is as likely to be off pitch as on. But all these excesses seem merely to contribute to the vitality of the enterprise, and in spite of all its crudities, the concert is irresistible. Vocal lapses or no, Miss Garland is, above all, an appealing singer. Long years separate her introduction of "Over the Rainbow" and a later Harold Arlen tune, "The Man That Got Away," both of which are included here, and several more years separate these two songs from her concert, but the magic has held all the way.

The feeling of exultation with which the Garland recording is filled also pervaded the debut of Eileen Farrell last year as a formidable pop singer on a Columbia record called "I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues." The novel impact of that first record is not equaled by her second, "Here I Go Again," issued this fall, but once more we can only marvel at Miss Farrell's accomplishments. With strong rhythmic support by a swinging band under Luther Henderson, who is also responsible for the arrangements, Miss Farrell sings with a jazzy ease that makes her unique among the various singers from the concert and opera worlds who have ventured into popular music from time to time. She is, essentially, a superb soprano on a lark rather than inherently a jazz singer, but the sheer verve of her performances is astonishing.

Frank Sinatra's recording "Sinatra Swings," the second he has made for his own label, Reprise, is a vast improvement over the first, and this has turned out to be one of his most impressive collections in some time. It puzzles me a little, too, for I had become accustomed to the gradual coarsening of his voice; the crooner of the past has been adopting a swinging, heavily accented style that enables him to avoid legato singing. He demonstrates here, however, in a couple of seemingly stunning vocal displays, his ability to build and sustain tones. Very possibly, those modern wizards, the tape engineers, had a big hand in all of this; nevertheless, I found the set extremely effective, with its stimulating updating of "Granada," its pulsating "You're Nobody 'Til Somebody Loves You," its jaunty "Moonlight on the Ganges," and other slick items.

In dealing with "popular" records, a term that narrows the field of music considerably, one must look hopefully to the musical comedy stage in any year, for that's where most good new songs come from; elsewhere we are forced to depend mainly on the efforts of superior singers with standard material. In any proper list of the more attractive popular recordings of 1961, there must appear the latest products of such distinguished show music composers as Frank Loesser and Noel Coward, along with such lesser-known but still gifted writers as Richard Adler, Johnny Burke, and Jerry Herman. The original-cast albums of "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" (Loesser), "Sail Away" (Coward), "Kwamina" (Adler), and "Milk and Honey" (Herman) all strike me as being among the better things 1961 has had to offer, and to them I should like to add the cast albums of two of last spring's shows, both failures, as it happened, but considerably enjoyable in their recorded versions. One is "Donnybrook!", boasting some well-written lyrics by Johnny Burke and tuneful, though not striking, music by the same man. The

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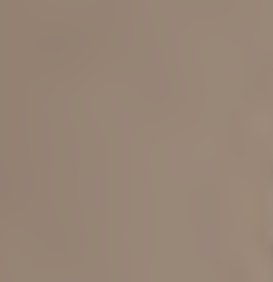

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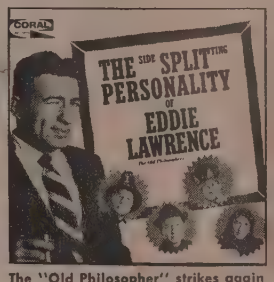

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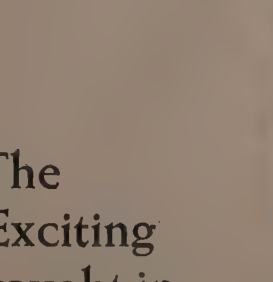

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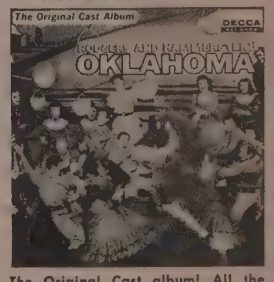

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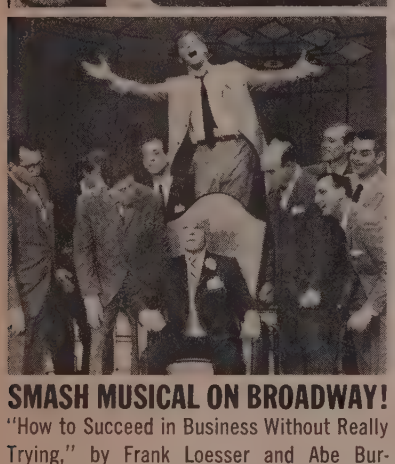
other is "The Happiest Girl in the World," and it gains its distinction from the fact that all its music is the work of Offenbach, equipped with clever new lyrics by E. Y. Harburg.

Another show album that I found disarming was "The Premise" (Vanguard), a performance of sketches of varying length, presented by four vivacious young entertainers and taken down in a Greenwich Village coffee house where, as far as I know, the business is still going on.

I am also reminded that Capitol this year brought out a glistening new recording of twelve of the old Goodman band's more popular works, called "The Hits of Benny Goodman." Benny took the clarinet leads, of course, and a few of his sidemen of old (Mel Powell, piano; Hymie Shertzer, sax; Chris Griffin, trumpet) were planted in the solid eighteen-piece band. It covers old ground, I'll admit, but I was taken with the brilliance of the sound on this recording and had a grand time playing it.



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For Children

by Selma Gordon

There are probably enough worthwhile children's recordings available for Christmas this season to keep their adult donors busy well into the coming year. It is almost a truism that the best records for children often require more thoughtful participation by adults than by the children themselves.

Children's records fall into two categories: those that immediately delight children, and those that initially enchant adults and win over resistant children only through their parents' efforts. In the latter group are records for younger children in the "music appreciation" realm. The most elaborate effort to sensitize youthful ears to good music is RCA Victor's not yet complete "Adventures in Music" series (LE 1000, 1001, 1002, 1004, 1006, 1009). Edited by Gladys Tipton, Professor of Music Education at Columbia's Teachers College, and admirably played, with no Pablum touches, by the National Symphony Orchestra, each album's selections have been tailored to the interest level and attention span of children in each of the six elementary school grades. The series was designed for use by institutions, but there is no reason why these recordings shouldn't be exactly what an interested parent might have ordered to encourage and direct his child's musical tastes. (Each album comes with a Teacher's Guide offering an awesome range of material appropriate to the age level addressed—for instance, this item on Tchaikovsky for first-graders: "Tchaikovsky was usually an untidy little boy who had buttons missing from his clothes and rumpled, tousled hair.")

On a rather different order, though no less serious in intent, is the Carl Orff–Gunild Keetman album "Music for Children" (Angel 3582B). This two-record set is an adaptation (in the Queen's English and delivered by English school children) of speech and rhythmic exercises, songs, and instrumental pieces originally devised by Orff and Keetman in the early thirties to encourage active musical expression in German children. "Active" is the key word, and children should have available, while listening, their own music tables equipped with such tools as rattles, triangles, tambourines, water glasses tuned for tapping, or, if you want to get fancy, a xylophone or glockenspiel. It is Orff's belief that traditional instruments frustrate small children, who lack the proper muscular control to express themselves with them.

For the older child, perhaps graduates of the "Adventures in Music" series, there is "Invitation to Music" (Folkways FT 3603), prepared and urbanely narrated by the American composer Elie Siegmeister. The approach here is thoroughly didactic, the brief musical excerpts always illustrative of some basic lesson in rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color, or form.

For a child taking piano lessons, there is probably no better way to illustrate the beauty and range of the instrument than with the new Golden release "An Introduction to Great Piano Music" (LP 68). The Harry Davis renditions of such standard beginner and intermediate pieces as "The Happy Farmer" and Bach's "Minuet in G" seem so effortlessly perfect that the novice, bogged down in scales, is bound to get a new lease on the old keyboard. An offering for the child taking dance lessons is "Music for the Ballet Studio" (Folkways FC 7673), a collection of forty-one piano pieces composed expressly as accompaniment to pliés, jetés, and ballonnés. Not really in the lesson category, but completely captivating on any count, is a new Folkways release, "Chantons en Français (FC 7719), issued in conjunction with a book of the same title. This is Volume One, Part One, of what happily promises to be a series designed to teach older children to speak French. The songs are sung in flawlessly distinct French by Alan Mills and Helene Baillargeon. So Gallic and sprightly are the tunes that a two-year-old at our house has asked for them time and again. A fine gift for all children to about age twelve.

In the RCA "Bluebird Series," there's an engaging album for four- to eight-year-olds called "Around the Block, Around the World" (LY 100). Introducing thirteen well-chosen songs from practically everywhere, the first band is a pleasant story; the rest of the recording is simply songs —from Greek to Chinese—sung both in the original language and in English. In the same series, there's a new release, "On the Ranch" (LY 103), this one for boys aged six and up. Its two sides are devoted to detailing the gradual (oh, so gradual) transformation of a small dude into a full-fledged cowboy. It's practically guaranteed to enthrall all would-be cowboys within earshot.

In the nonmusical line, I would unqualifiedly recommend a new Carl Sandburg record, "Poems for Children" (Caedmon TC 1124), written and read by him. Many of the poems and wise words will have more meaning for parents' ears, but never mind, the record won't be outgrown. Spoken Arts has an album of "Oscar Wilde Fairy Tales" (785) which, again, is pure delight to adult ears, and leaves lots of growing room for children over nine. For the younger children who are, almost without exception, Dr. Seuss lovers, there's RCA Victor's "Bartholomew and the Oobleck" and "Yertle the Turtle" (CAL 1035). These stories, and others on the same record, are told by Marvin Miller who adds high fidelity to the original Seuss flavor. "Children's Stories and Songs" (Folkways FC 7771), by Ed McCurdy, has a fine, wry story called "People and Horses" and several silly but winning songs. Still in the song-story category is Playtime's "Alice in Wonderland" (PT 112), an exceptionally well-done retelling, in song, of several thoughtfully chosen children's works. It's probably nostalgia, but I was pleased to find The Singing Lady still in fine fettle on Wonderland's "Fairy Tales by Ireene Wicker" (1427) and "Snow White/Rumpelstiltskin" (1437). For older children, and ageless Dickens fans, Caedmon may be releasing by Christmas "Pickwick Papers," read by Boris Karloff (TC 1121). For boys, and maybe girls, nine to twelve, I'd think, there's the highly literate "Stories and Songs of the Civil War" (RCA Bluebird, CAL 1032), narrated by Ralph Bellamy. RCA doesn't take sides—or rather it does: one record side for the Confederacy and one for the Union.

Finally, in the spirit of the season, I recommend two further items: a first-rate collection "Christmas Songs of Many Lands" (Folkways FC 7750) and a superb reading of "A Christmas Carol" (Spoken Art 728), by Frank Pettingell.

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Television: How to Be Adaptable

by Brock Brower

If we're looking to take regulatory action around here, I've got a suggestion. From now on, the first legally required step before any television adaptation—whether it be from the novel, the short story, the play, or the third-run movie of the Same Name—ought to be the filing of an affidavit stating that everything coming out of the bureau drawers and off the bathroom shelf is really going to fit into the only small valise available. An hour on television is roughly equivalent to an airline overnight bag, with the space of a bulky hostess gift already taken up inside by the commercials. You can't put much in it—really not much more than a good short story. They pack in haste for television, and without a little prior thought about just what *can* be taken down to the studio, it invariably turns out that the play's best scenes, the story's chiefest irony, the novel's fullest characters—sometimes even whole authors—get left behind, or hopelessly crushed, or covered with toothpaste.

Few of us are likely to forget how, several years back, A. E. Hotchner used to grab a Hemingway short story off the option hook, cram it into his Dopp-kit along with some sentimental toilet water, mental talc, and Super-Blue dialogue, run over to CBS, and upend the whole mess on top of the prime time Buick had purchased. His padding of the short stories—e.g., "The Gambler, the Nun and the Radio"—was only rivaled by his reduction of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" to a troglodytic creature that, appropriately enough, spent the first half of its constricted existence inside a low cave. After spelunking away one week, the cast concentrated the next on Blowing the Bridge, a structure that by then looked to the jaundiced eye as if it would easily give way to some quick work with a keyhole saw. The total effect was claustrophobic, a narrowing down and paring away of all larger dimensions: Hemingway's as an artist; Spain's as a country and a cause; Pilar's, Robert Jordan's, and "Guapa's" as *grande passion;* even the earth's as mover beneath all those who obscenity well. It ended up guilty of Adaptation's worst sin, that of driving the audience *away* from the original instead of drawing them toward it.

There are always excuses. Even the reasonable ones of Time and Money, those Moirai that haunt even boundless talent on any TV production. Hotchner did have to throw away practically every other page of his first draft of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" to suit Time, and director John Frankenheimer, running over budget, did have to take a single, multidirectional set in a West Side studio for the entire Spanish countryside. They worked nine days and nine nights, but in plain fact, no sacrifice was ever going to make that expansive, mannerish, oddly flawed 1940 Book-of-the-Month-Club selection "right for television." It was the wrong property, or at least—as seems to be true of so many adaptations of difficult material—it was so conceived and executed as to appear woefully wrong, as if the medium itself couldn't quite comprehend its own fare.

Of course, it was a far, far nobler effort than what has sometimes *passed* for adaptation. When Jacqueline Babbin and Audrey Gellen first started working for David Susskind, they should have split credit with the paste pot. Their "adaptation" of "The Fallen Idol," for instance, was nothing but the hard work of Graham Greene and Sir Carol Reed parceled out to five different cameras. And it's a disappointment to find an old entrepreneur like Fred Coe presently doing something quite similar to NBC's "Theater 62," using his vast talents to operate a rerun house (and proving, at best, that television can do "Notorious" and "Spellbound" *without* Ingrid Bergman). It gives the lie to mere faithfulness as the basic virtue in an adaptation. Nothing, in one way, could be more "faithful to the original" than these taped re-dos of old movies. As faithful as the butter pat to the butter mold. The point is, there must be an original that is worth an exercise of faith in the first place, and then, faith is not so easily kept.

Recently, David Susskind offered a rare and commendable example of true fidelity in his production of Graham Greene's "The Power and the Glory." Already remarked for Sir Laurence Olivier's almost beatific performance as the priest (and remarkable also for the manner in which George C. Scott and Patty Duke often held Sir Laurence even), it deserves equal praise for the integrity of Dale Wasserman's adaptation. His came closer to Greene's novel than any other previous attempt had — closer than John Ford's movie with Henry Fonda, or the off-Broadway play with Fritz Weaver, or even Susskind's own previous offering of the property as a "Play of the Week." At the outset, Susskind cleared the boards on himself—"I wasn't satisfied with our NTA production, so I told Dale to go right back to the original"—and the result was a deft telescoping of the novel into a two-hour passion play.

There was, first of all, no drawing back. The priest is a whisky priest, with no peppermint to hide his telltale breath from the mass audience. The priest has a daughter — a fact not simply "hinted at" but dramatized as clearly as in the novel — and Maria, the child's mother, says for all to hear, "I was proud of being a priest's woman." All the priest's sins—even the touch of simony that infects his bargaining over the price of baptisms, as he is tempted back to sacerdotal authority, are faithfully catalogued, establishing the foul ground out of which his sanctity exfoliates. The priest is Greene's priest, in word, deed, drunkenness, mortal sin, and martyrdom.

But not only is the priest kept whole; so is the best of the novel. What little Wasserman was forced to leave behind in his expert job of packing seems expendable or even foreign. Gone is the village woman who cloyingly reads aloud from cheap tracts of saints' lives as counterpoint to the priest's own uncertain stumbling toward sainthood, but she is a narrative, not a dramatic, device. (Her best contribution, a few lines about the priest's baptizing a boy "Carlotta" while in his cups, is nicely saved by putting it as confession into the priest's own mouth.) Captain and Mrs. Fellows, also lost, are really trial sketches of Major and Mrs. Scobie for "The Heart of the Matter," and belong there, not here; only their daughter, Coral, is needed to go on an errand of mercy to the priest in the banana shed. Mr. and Miss Lehr, siblings in antisepsis, are Greene's private demonstration against the sterile cleanliness of Protestantism in a naturally dirty world, and are only missed as curios. The boy who spits on the lieutenant's revolver butt is really there to meet the new priest when he arrives, but Wasserman's one major plot change —a highly sensible one, dramatically—has been to end with the individual martyrdom of the priest rather than with the salvation, through the ubiquitous priest, of the State. So the boy can go. What stays, centrally, are the *jefe* with his toothache, the lieutenant with his revolutionary decency, and the mestizo with his thirty pieces of silver. Wasserman enforced the mestizo even further by giving him the canceled beggar's function in obtaining illegal wine for the priest's Mass-saying and illegal brandy for the priest's own thirst.

That scene—in which the governor's cousin sells the priest the precious, black-market bottle of California red (the illicit blood of Christ), and then, with the help of the *jefe* and the mestizo, proceeds to drink it dry—was played out on television as unrelentingly as any episode of despair in all of Greeneland:

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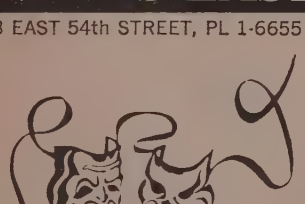

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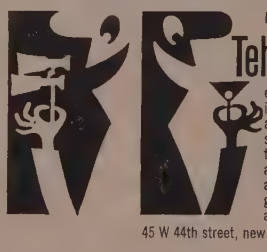

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The lines here were mostly Greene's—a novelist whose own religious calling is dialogue writing—but no adapter is everywhere that lucky. Wasserman had to pull lines from interior monologue, even straight descriptive prose, but he has the adapter's ultimate skill, the ability to hide a graft. The lieutenant, strongly and consistently drawn in Wasserman's script (and immeasurably bodied-out in Scott's performance), is really a construct of this sort. A thing of spoken rags and prose patches. Out of one sentence of Greene's —"He [the lieutenant] couldn't remember afterwards anything of his dreams except laughter, laughter all the time, and a long passage in which he could find no door"—Wasserman built an entire threnody for the lieutenant to utter over the priest's shot body. And by meticulous cutting and shifting of lines, he set up a midnight dialectic between the jailed priest and the jailer lieutenant that sums up beautifully an argument that Greene could almost be said to have let ramble on too long in the novel. And—final triumph—he wrote a last confession for the priest—spoken directly to God, after the lone apostate priest in the State refuses to come and absolve him—that *could* have been Greene's. "God? Will you be offended if I speak into your ear directly? . . . The people of this State deserved a Saint. You did not send them one. For some reason which I do not understand, You sent them me. . . . I have been useless. . . . I might just as well have never lived. But if my life has no meaning, let my death not be the same. . . ."

Except that—fine as it was, and so near to Greene—the confessional speech did do a subtle violence to the novel. In *any* television adaptation, this was bound to happen somewhere along the line, because the one untransferable quality of the novel is its studied ambiguity about sanctity. Important as this is, it can't be maintained in the necessitous black-and-white world of choice that dominates even the most sophisticated television drama. Gray is for longhairs; baldness is occasionally all. "In God's name what do you want?" says the priest to the mestizo in Wasserman's adaptation. "Are you my Judas?"—lines that are really prods in the ribs. *Got it now, got it?* And for similar reasons, Wasserman turned Greene's mild little dentist, Mr. Tench, quite suddenly into a violent anti-Catholic, who even hurls the priest's Latin prayer book across the room. *Y'see what you're seeing now?* All these tendencies come to a head when the priest must finally face his God. Greene has it occur to him only at that moment "that it would have been quite easy to have been a saint." But his efforts at confession are hopelessly distracted, enfe lackluster. "He felt like so who has missed happine seconds at an appointed p But on the television s every second counts, and many frames per second it be damn *clear* to everyone in condition of beatitude the is going to his God. Hen rather magnificent set-piec fession, one that I'm sur Laurence would have w written anyhow.

But this is a last, ins quibble with a fine adap that marks something of a point. And it's a good place which to view—far below afraid—the next Susskind tation, Oscar Wilde's "Pict Dorian Gray." This one has into the hands of those B and Gellen girls again.

Certainly, they have a lem. A twofold problem. On the only character in D Gray worth a close-up is Henry Wotton, and then o conversation; and two, that Henry, Dorian, and Basil a as fey as three-dollar bil there goes your hero, and a your hidden motivation. W left is one of Oscar's moral f which are only of interest used as the rack over wh drapes his *fin de siècle* deca in all its plush and irides Since that Cloth of Gold ca shown, there seems to be point in the project. It's u to pursue Wilde unless willing to step in a little ov pomegranate. Dorian Gr simply the wrong sort of erty for television adapt yet Mlles. Babbin and Gell seriously trying to stuff i an hour.

Available time and the literary property, in fact, perpetual imbalance in tele adaptation. Once, I think seen them come out just and that was on "Alfred cock Presents," when Her Gingold appeared as Lady lotta in an adaptation of Schwartz-Metterklume Me by Saki. The humor of that story—the jest of a lady posed as a governess and t all the little children to a the rape of the Sabine wo exactly fitted the twent minutes. It was feather-ligh for a change, perfectly su and perfectly balanced.

In fact, I don't see why Saki hasn't been picked u adaptation—"The Open dow"; the eating of Aunt by Conradin's polecat-fer "Sredni Vashtar" ("... Co made himself another pi toast."); or the whole "C cles of Clovis" as a twent week series. It could be lau with a special—"Tobermo with Rex Harrison as Clovi maybe Liz Taylor for th Tobermory. Male, not fe Get the cat fixed, and see i Garland's kid is available.

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PREVIEWS

Each month in this section SHOW previews those films, plays, and television programs which it believes will be of interest to its readers. The idea is to provide advance knowledge of interesting new productions and to provide background information which will enhance the reader's enjoyment of them. Inclusion in the preview section means that, in the opinion of the editors, the movie or play or program is worth seeing. No attempt, however, has been made to warn readers away from the meretricious, except by declining to list such efforts here. Some productions are included in this section, not because they are perfect but because a portion of the work—a particular performance, an engaging bit of stagecraft, the importance of the subject matter treated—is worthy of attention even though the total conception may be flawed.

A word of caution about the listing of television program times and the dates when touring and community theater and music attractions may play in your area. Last-minute scheduling changes can occur, so it is well to check a reliable local source before making final plans for viewing or attending.

TELEVISION

by John S. Erwin

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NBC
MONDAY, DEC. 4, 8-9 P.M. EST

NBC News has compiled a penetrating, informative survey of contemporary Japan which proves that East and West have at long last met, as producer Lou Hazam says, "at a head-on and rapid pace." "We spent days filming Tokyo between eight and nine A.M.," he continues, "with millions of people pouring out of commuter trains, buses, and subways, surging through narrow streets with every kind of imaginable traffic—bicycles, three-wheel trucks, motorcycles, taxis. Over all was the din of traffic horns, power drills, policemen's whistles, and loud-speaker announcements." Nowhere is the influence of the West more evident than in these scenes. The younger generation, who came to maturity in war and its aftermath, are "Westernizers" and are trying to accommodate themselves to changes that have taken the Western world three hundred years to digest, forcing a tremendous conflict between old and new. It is this conflict that Hazam has focused on, against a background of the traditional order. "We show an Elvis Presley-type Japanese entertainer singing 'Hound Dog' to a crowd of ecstatic teen-agers in a coffee shop," says Hazam. "The Japanese often mimic the sounds of the American singers without knowing what the English words mean. We show Rockette-type dancers; movie billboards advertising American westerns in Japanese, with American movie stars; a forest of television aerials; Japanese beatniks, the girls with pony tails and slacks; department stores with American styles of merchandise; and crowds eating peanuts and drinking beer at baseball games." Narrator Edwin Newman sums up by saying, "This is a vastly different nation from the one that challenged the United States in World War II. The new Japan, the Japan in which democracy and individual liberties are considered the right of each individual, is still a long way from materialization. Before the kind of society the young people of Japan now wish for can be brought into being, many more unattractive and even painful changes will certainly come about." This documentary is a careful, sometimes brilliant study of a nation in flux.

WALT DISNEY'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF COLOR

NBC
SUNDAYS, 7:30-8:30 P.M. EST

"HANS BRINKER
AND THE SILVER SKATES"

When Walt Disney explores the world of nature, there is no one to equal him. He is also on sure, if oft-trod, ground when he ventures into fantasy. But his attempts at "live action" drama are more often a financial than a creative success. The Eastman Kodak Company recently gave Disney free range to produce for television whatever strikes his fancy, providing he use color. At a time when only one out of every fifty television sets can receive color, Kodak's decision is commercially inexplicable. But even a gray Disney is usually better than none at all. A film as charming as his magnificently hued opener, "Mathmagic Land," made one regret the scarcity of color sets; it was an ingenious blend of color and information. But in his second, "The Horsemasters," focused on an English riding academy, Disney put some of his contract players to work (Annette Funicello and Tommy Kirk) and wound up with overly conventional television drama.

The output for "Wonderful World" will follow the same pattern as Disney's other activities. The programs range from nature stories to animated cartoons, from tales of adventure to adaptations of famous classics, and musical extravaganzas. Children are certain to find the series a constant delight. Discriminating adults should pick and choose. Coming up on December 3 is "A Fire Called Jeremiah," the story of a raging forest fire and the people who fight it. Notable is their photography of a Montana forest. The show's stars are real-life fire fighters. On December 10, Professor Ludwig Von Drake, Disney's newest pen-and-ink creation, appears as a child psychologist in "Kids Is Kids." He asserts that kids are all right; it's the parents who are nutty. Donald Duck and family serve to illustrate. The way Hollywood puts a movie together is the basis of "Backstage Party," to be shown December 17. "The Great Cat Family," an animated appraisal of the cat in society, including a parade of Disney-created cats, will be seen on Christmas Eve. "Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates" will close out the month on December 31. This is the first of a two-part show filmed in Sweden and Holland with a primarily foreign cast.

ALCOA PREMIERE

ABC
TUESDAYS, 10-10:30 OR 11 P.M. EST

ASTAIRE

"Alcoa Premiere" has proved to be as neatly polished as a piece of aluminum, and the equal of that metal in flexibility, malleability, and, alas, intellectual stimulation. Which is not to say that the program is not worth watching if you've had a wearying day, or have read all the books you have on hand. In short, it often attains that level of amiable entertainment which should be standard on television but which, of course, is not.

One of the genuine pleasures of "Alcoa Premiere" is Mr. Fred Astaire, who acts as host for the series. Even sitting still, he is more graceful than anyone else in show business. And, lest his fans be concerned by the seeming stasis of this assignment, let it be noted that he is happy in his work. "It's not easy," he says. "You can't intrude on the action that follows. For the most part, I introduce the story and fade out, then appear again at the end. What counts is not to be seen a moment too long." Occasionally, Astaire will join the other (generally excellent) players in the evening's revels. "I'm always glad to do a serious role," he says. "The racing bit in 'On the Beach' is a perfect example."

Astaire may never get anything that meaty on "Alcoa Premiere." But with a line-up of creative talent that includes Alfred Hitchcock, Eric Ambler, Ray Bradbury. David Karp, Ernest Kinoy, and Alex Segal—all gentlemen with the ability to raise popular entertainment to the level of art on occasion—he may get some interesting things to do before the season is out.

Scheduled for December are "The Breaking Point" (December 5) and "Delbert, Texas" (December 12). The former is a tale of a policeman and a woman who conspire to murder her husband and who somehow involve an innocent salesman in their crime. It stars Brian Keith and Mary Murphy. "Delbert, Texas" features the estimable David Wayne in one of those things about a chance encounter between strangers. This time it's a man and wife who meet an AWOL soldier in a gas station and attempt to talk him into going straight. All this may not sound very promising, but production quality usually assures a pretty good hour's amusement.

THE WIZARD OF OZ

CBS
SUNDAY, DEC. 10, 6-8 P.M. EST

EULVER

HAMILTON

"I thought I'd never get off that broomstick," said the Wicked Witch, otherwise known as actress Margaret Hamilton. The 1939 M-G-M production, in which she appeared, is now a Christmas-time tradition on CBS. "As a matter of fact," she continued, "I never did. After 'The Wizard of Oz' was released, I was always cast as a meddlesome, mean next-door neighbor or an ill-tempered old maid — someone nasty." Asked if she was sorry she had played the role, she reflected for a moment. "I think if an actor can be remembered for one or two roles during a career, he is very fortunate indeed. I think 'The Wizard of Oz' is a wonderful picture, and I was happy to be in it. There is one thing I wish, though: I wish the Witch hadn't been made as scary as she was. I don't think children should ever be frightened, and there were some shots that even I was appalled at. But everything connected with 'The Wizard' was one hundred per cent. M-G-M set out to make a picture that would last. The effort was a hundred per cent in every department. Look at the characters. There's a hundred-per-cent dog, a hundred-per-cent little girl, and a hundred-per-cent witch. But even M-G-M had no idea the picture would be as durable at it is." Just how durable is proved every year at this time, when a new group of kids sit in rapt attention as the legend of Oz unfolds before them and their parents find themselves caught up anew in an ageless fantasy.

"It was a very difficult set to work on," Miss Hamilton recalls. "There were so many trick shots and effects. But the personal rewards have been great. I received so many letters from children, asking if I was really green or why did I want to hurt Dorothy and why did I want to take her dog away. Children are still fascinated with me. Scared, but fascinated. Recently, while I was playing a stock engagement, a mother brought her little girl backstage to meet me. I had just taken off my make-up and was sitting at my dressing table. The little girl came in, looked at me, looked at her mother, looked around the room—not saying a word. Finally, she looked under the couch, and her mother asked why. 'I'm looking for the Witch,' she answered."

And so are we all—the Wicked Witch and the Tin Woodman and the Cowardly Lion and, best of all, the Wizard. For they are living reminders of a better time and place.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN AND THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

CBS
THURSDAY, DEC. 14, 7:30-8:30 P.M. EST

BERNSTEIN

"A Joyful Noise" is the title of Leonard Bernstein's first music appreciation hour for adults this season. It is an apt title—for his following among middle-brows who have convinced themselves that they really ought to know more about music is immense, and they may be counted upon to be clustered about their television sets just as if A Very Serious Discussion Program were on. For once, they are right to be there, and their chorus of delight is one in which all of us might well join. Unlike others whose goal is uplift, Bernstein is a master showman, one who has taken the trouble to be interesting as well as informative. His musical commentary is both literate and brilliantly communicative; his enthusiasms, which seem to know no bounds, wonderfully infectious. You can quarrel with Bernstein's interpretations of the masterworks, but it is impossible to gainsay his qualities as a musical educator. As he once put it, "I talk hard about music," which is to say he is neither cute nor condescending but, rather, serious and perfectly willing to tackle difficult abstractions if such are necessary—and they usually are—to make us hear with educated ears.

On his first broadcast, which CBS has generously placed in prime time, Bernstein will discuss the music of Christmas, for which he seems to have a special fondness, and, it is hinted, he will have a favorable word or two to say about peace. None of the seven programs he will do in this series will be as complex as those he used to do for "Omnibus," in which the orchestra was used merely to illustrate, musically, the major points in his lectures. There will thus be more music and less Bernstein in this season's shows. In a way, that's too bad, for on the "Omnibus" programs Bernstein solved, in a multitude of engaging ways, the problem of making a serious musical program visually entertaining. Without those gimmicks, orchestral broadcasts, for all their fancy shots through the strings of the harp, tend to be enervating to the eye. It is a problem that even the Bernstein personality, and his famous choreographic podium manner, cannot totally surmount.

Be that as it may, Bernstein and the Philharmonic still represent educational television at its best.

THE ENCHANTED NUTCRACKER

ABC
SATURDAY, DEC. 23, 7:30-8:30 P.M. EST

LAWRENCE CANBY

One of ABC's first attempts in recent years at a musical spectacular is Sam and Bella Spewack's adaptation of Tchaikovsky's seventy-year-old fantasy, "The Nutcracker," retitled, for no special reason, "The Enchanted Nutcracker." Jolly, sprightly, colorful, this version, the Spewacks say, "hasn't much of the original story, which is as dreary as the music is charming. We've kept the nutcracker, naturally, and the little girl is still named Clara. It's pretty good, we feel —the integration of the main fabric of mood and music."

Actually, their finished product does not depart as drastically as they claim from the original. That was all ballet and many yards wide. The television version uses dialogue to clarify continuity and to act as a bridge between the new dances that have been fitted to the familiar music. The modernization has deprived "The Nutcracker" of its wild Russian charm, but many will appreciate the familiarity of the modern-day setting. The "new" Clara is a little girl in a Boston boarding school, brokenhearted as her schoolmates depart with their parents for the Christmas holidays. Dr. Gombault (played by Pierre Olaf), the school director, tells her that her father and mother are traveling and can not be with her for the holidays. He presents her with a magic gift—a nutcracker—and explains that if she puts it under her pillow she will dream beautiful dreams, and find, in her dreams, all that she wishes for. She takes his advice, and the result is the predictable one: a series of flying, floating dances in which all that she wants comes to her. Modernized or not, the familiar legend retains at least some of its ageless charm.

Besides Pierre Olaf (of "Carnival!"), starring in ABC's holiday special are Carol Lawrence (who played in "West Side Story"), Robert Goulet (of "Camelot"), and ten-year-old Linda Canby.

THE COMING OF CHRIST (PROJECT 20)

NBC
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20, 8:30-9 P.M. EST

HYATT

First shown a year ago, and described by Donald Hyatt (NBC Director of Special Projects) as "a narrative approach to the most inspiring story ever told," "The Coming of Christ" uses the highly effective technique of "free camera exploration" of the rich detail of fine paintings. These have been gathered from museums and art collections all over the world.

"The Flemish artists are our first choice," says Daniel Jones, the man who led Hyatt's research team. At least seven of them will figure prominently in "The Coming of Christ"—van der Goes, van der Weyden, David, Memling, Massys, van Eyck, and Rubens. "The paintings of these artists are especially valuable to us for the realism not only of Christ Himself but of the world He lived in, the people around Him, and the atmosphere of His time and place." The concentration will be on artists of the Renaissance and through the early seventeenth century. They won't all be Flemish, by any means. The Italian and French schools of this period will be used as illustrative material, too."

The script, by Richard Hanser, is based largely on the book of Luke, from the King James version of the Bible. Robert Russell Bennett wrote the score.

This "Project 20" production achieved the largest audience (over 13,500,000 homes) ever reached by a network half-hour public affairs program in television history up to December, 1960. A sequel to the Christmas presentation, to be called "He Is Risen," is being prepared by NBC for televising during the 1962 Easter season. The Christmas program, one of documentary television's finest achievements, is well worth a second look. And if you missed it last year, it is a must for your viewing schedule this year—one of the very few television efforts to penetrate to the essential meaning of Christmas.

BETTMANN ARCHIVE

BOSCH'S "ADORATION OF THE MAGI"

AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

NBC
SUNDAY, DEC. 24, 4-5 P.M. EST

This will be the eleventh annual Christmas season performance of Gian-Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors," NBC's lasting gift to the television public. Inspired by Hieronymus Bosch's "Adoration of the Magi," and the result of a commission by the NBC-TV Opera Theater, "Amahl" is a complete, melodic episode from the story of the Nativity—a bare, imaginative tale that is resolved in the small though shining glory of a minor miracle. It is set to a score that needs no footnotes, no abacus to understand and enjoy.

"Amahl and the Night Visitors" tells of the first Christmas Eve. Following the path of the Star of the East to the Infant Christ, the three kings stop overnight with a poor woman and her crippled son, Amahl. To entertain the royal visitors, nearby shepherds bring food, and dance. Later, when all are asleep, the mother attempts to steal the jewels and other gifts to help her son. The kings forgive her and Amahl offers his crutch as a gift to the Child. He is miraculously cured, and departs with the kings to Bethlehem.

Since "Amahl and the Night Visitors" was first composed, Gian-Carlo Menotti has written other scores, many more mature and provocative. But this Christmas story will be remembered and looked forward to as a miniature of classic beauty.

CBS
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, 10-10:30 A.M. EST

"Of course, I'd been on television before," says Mary Fickett, hostess on CBS's new hit, "Calendar," "but it never had any attraction for me over a stage part—or over the movies, for that matter. When 'Calendar' was suggested to me, I knew immediately that this was the program for me—something that I really wanted to do—informal, live, spontaneous. I couldn't be happier."

CBS is happy, too. The response to the show has seldom been equaled by a daytime program. The audience for such programs is usually women. But proof of its wide-ranging appeal lies in the volume of male response. "What on earth are they doing at home at that hour of the day?" asks Miss Fickett. "They can't all be sick!"

"Calendar" is a program of the utmost variety. It has freshness, simplicity, and a charm usually missing from daytime television. The program is based upon interviews with personalities in *today's* news. Almost in tomorrow's news. Plans are likely to change on a few hours' notice so the producers can take advantage of news breaks.

Here are a few of the best examples of past news-making half-hours: the exclusive interview with Willy Brandt, Mayor of West Berlin; Sal Durante, the nineteen-year-old who caught Roger Maris' sixty-first home run ball, in an exclusive appearance at which he met the Sacramento restaurateur who had offered a $5,000 bounty for the historic token; Dr. Albert Sabin, the developer of the live-virus vaccine against polio; Mark Schorer, the biographer of Sinclair Lewis; composer Douglas Moore, interviewed the day before his latest opera, "The Wings of the Dove," had its premiere at the New York City Center; Voit Gilmore, director of the newly established United States Travel Service; Adam Wade, the popular new singer who, two years ago, was working as a medical researcher in Pittsburgh with Dr. Jonas Salk.

Both Miss Fickett and Harry Reasoner, who helps her run the show, know that someday the show won't go on—at least, not as planned. "The day will come when some celebrity will fail to arrive," Mary says, "and Harry will have to hold an interview with an invisible guest. But he is up to that—improvisation and invention are a specialty with him. It's one of his talents and requires no props."

Reasoner, as a prelude to playing host to a national audience of women, wrote his first and only book, "Tell Me About Women," in 1946. Since then he has married and become not only the father of six children, five of whom are girls, but one of the most energetic and versatile of CBS's news correspondents. He brings to "Calendar" a panorama of news experience—journalism, radio, television reporter, commentator, and drama critic.

Mary Fickett has had a remarkably bright career in remarkably few years. She is the daughter of a well-known radio director, and her first Broadway role was in "I Know My Love" with the Lunts; later she took over the lead in "Tea and Sympathy." She followed that with her best-known portrayal—Eleanor Roosevelt in "Sunrise at Campobello." In addition, she has starred in almost every network dramatic series that you can name for the past ten years and has made two motion pictures, the notable "Man on Fire," with Bing Crosby, and "Kathy O'."

Of her new routine, Miss Fickett says, "I have to get up at five-thirty, and that is a problem I never had before. But even when I was in a play, I wasn't one for lolling around in bed until eleven or twelve. There are a lot of new problems for me connected with a show like this but I'm adjusting rapidly—more so than my husband." (She is married to actor James Congdon.) What makes it all worth while are reactions like that of a Westport mother who wrote, "I look forward to ten o'clock. It's a warm, intimate program—new and fresh. And it makes me feel that it is directed to me personally." Her feeling is typical, and gives the ring of conviction to Miss Fickett's voice when she says, "For the moment, and I hope for a long time to come, this is it for me."

REASONER FICKETT

The first invitation to the Rose Bowl read: "Ladies and Gentlemen are requested to bring with them to the Park, all the roses possible so that strangers and tourists may have the full benefit of our floral display." Thus the first Tournament of Roses was held on January 1, 1890. Its function was to inform other regions of the United States that while they were freezing, Pasadena was enjoying mild weather and an abundance of flowers and oranges. Three thousand people showed up. Today, the Tournament attracts close to one million visitors, with the festivities televised to an estimated seventy-six million more. The Tournament Association has succeeded in getting its message across. Bess Myerson and Ronald Reagan will describe the events for CBS; Roy Neal, John Davidson, and Betty White for NBC.

Foot races, sack races, and a tug of war were the attractions in 1890. But by 1902, the "afternoon entertainment," as it was called, had become somewhat more spectacular. Stanford played the University of Michigan in the first football game. At stake was the tab for the six days' expenses. The turnout was so large, the committee attempted to stage another game the following year, but failed. Chariot races occupied the arena from 1904 until 1916, when underdog Washington State agreed to meet Brown University, and upset the Ivy Leaguers, 14 to 0. Although the Tournament Association lost $11,000 that afternoon—a rainy one—it recognized the potential drawing power of collegiate football and drew up plans to build a suitable arena. Penn State bowed to the University of California in the first game played in the newly completed Rose Bowl in 1923. Originally built to seat 57,000, the Bowl now has a total capacity of 100,531. This year's classic, however, may usher in a major change in the line-up. The West will still be represented by one of the Big Five, but the opponent will not necessarily be a member of the Big Ten. A new agreement between the Big Ten and the Pacific Coast Conference is not expected to be reached until sometime in December, leaving little time for this year's arrangements to be completed. The Tournament Association may have to turn elsewhere for a visiting team, thus breaking the postwar tradition of a Midwest–West Coast play-off. Whoever the gladiators, NBC will carry the game, starting at 4:45 P.M. EST, Monday, January 1.

OTHER CONTESTS:

CBS

Bluebonnet Bowl: Saturday, December 16, 1:45-4:30 P.M. EST
Gator Bowl: Saturday, December 30, 2-5 P.M. EST
Cotton Bowl: Monday, January 1, 2:15-5 P.M. EST

ABC

Orange Bowl: Monday, January 1, 12:45 P.M. EST until conclusion

NBC

Liberty Bowl: Saturday, December 16, 1:30 P.M. EST until conclusion
Blue-Gray Game: Saturday, December 30, 1:30 P.M. EST until conclusion
Sugar Bowl: Monday, January 1, 1:45 P.M. EST until conclusion
NFL Championship Game: Sunday, December 31 (check local listings) Winners of the National Football League's Eastern and Western Divisions vie for championship honors in the park of the Western Conference titleholder.

BASKETBALL:

ABC

ECAC Holiday Basketball Festival: Saturday, December 30, 10 P.M. EST (pre-empts "Fight of the Week") Final game of the ECAC Invitational Tournament from Madison Square Garden.

NBC

NBA Basketball: Saturdays, 2:30 P.M. EST; December 2: Chicago Packers (new team in the league) meet Syracuse Nationals at Syracuse; December 9: Chicago at Philadelphia; December 23: New York at Boston.

UPI

THE PARADE, 1918

UPI

THE GAME, 1922

WISDOM

NBC
SUNDAY, DEC. 10, 17, 31, 5-5:30 P.M. EST

BEN-GURION

PICTORIAL PARADE

WRIGHT

Wisdom is a very good television program that has yet to find a sponsor wise enough to underwrite it. For that reason, its programs this season have consisted of reruns of interviews with the great minds who have come before its cameras in previous years. That the producers have not been allowed to add new faces and ideas to their anthology of good talks is a misfortune; that viewers have a chance to see again the fine programs of the past is a blessing. For, as Donald Hyatt, one of the producers, says, "'Wisdom' has brought the faces and minds of great men together with an enormous audience, to people who might never have heard of them before, or might have thought they existed only as myth or fable, and far in the past. The opinions and views expressed in these interviews are little less than a revelation. And, as history, the importance of these recorded talks is inestimable."

The December schedule:

December 10: The late Frank Lloyd Wright is interviewed by Hugh Downs (this was in Chicago in 1953). He traces the trends and tastes of America through its homes and commercial buildings to both their aesthetic and functional relation to the landscape around them. Wright is in the best of form. Asked what he considers his most satisfactory achievement, he says, "Oh, my dear boy—the next one, of course. The next building I build."

December 17: An interview with Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, the prominent religious liberal.

December 31: David Ben-Gurion, Prime Minister of Israel, great man of vision and faith, sums up his work this way: "This is the greatest happiness a man can feel—that he has made everything there is, that he could conquer nature—that he could do it. And this is the real happiness of man: creative life, conquest of nature, purpose . . . a great purpose."

ACCENT

CBS
SATURDAYS, 1:30-2 P.M. EST

KELLERMAN CIARDI

"THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL"

CULVER

Don Kellerman, coproducer of "Accent," is a thirty-four-year-old ex-police reporter who has spent all of his eight years in television on "sustainers" (unsponsored public service programs underwritten by the networks). Nevertheless, he has something to say about sponsors. "I can't understand why," says Kellerman, "after all our success, sponsors are not waiting outside in lines. We get more literate mail—I read every letter, letters written by people who are as bright as the people working on this show, or brighter. And that's a tribute to the show. Well, where are the sponsors? They're certainly not here. They don't come around, because we're not flashy enough. Well, we can get along without them." Kellerman readily asserts that the absence of sponsorship gives him the chance to do shows he is "genuinely interested in." "For instance," he says, "how many shows can do an assessment of the postwar novel? We plan to do just that in December. We want to show how writers like Baldwin, Philip Roth, Gold, and Mailer have important things to say and no one to listen to them. Some people are listening, sure, but not outside of informed groups. After the first World War, Hemingway, Faulkner, and Fitzgerald became national heroes. Where is that kind of feeling today? We also plan a show in December on Dag Hammarskjöld, not the public figure, but the 'private' man, whom Lippmann called 'the fine flower of the European tradition of civility . . .' For Christmas, we're taping Andersen's 'The Little Match Girl' in Copenhagen, shooting the streets and various locations with narration 'over.' There'll also be a show on how tribal patterns have tied the contemporary American Indian to the past, and how the river, in this case the Rio Grande, influenced our push westward. All of these ideas sprang from things we had seen, read, or heard. But the most important element around here is speech. Everybody talks —and wonderful things happen."

"Accent" as previously reported, was recently allowed a brief outing in a good time slot (5-5:30 on Sunday) but that has now been granted to Ted Mack's unspeakable "Amateur Hour." "Accent" is now in business on Saturday afternoon, but it is well worth the trip to this suburb of the cultural ghetto to sample its wares.

Poet John Ciardi has joined "Accent" as series host. Ciardi is Poetry Editor for the "Saturday Review." "In the Stoneworks" and "The Man Who Sang the Sillies" are his two most recent works.

THE BOB NEWHART SHOW

NBC
WEDNESDAY, 10-10:30 P.M. EST

NEWHART

In two years, Bob Newhart has, in his equable conversational manner, scrambled from the anonymity of business life (he was an accountant) to become one of the country's leading satirists. There is no bureaucrat too small, too weary, too obstructive, too mean of spirit to escape the affable flow of his comic insight and his merciless powers of exposure. A monologist, his most ferocious attacks have been leveled—dead center—at the almighty small businessman and the even smaller clerk. In short, those faceless heroes with whom we all must negotiate for small favors. His monologues, generally, are carefully wrought, filled with pungent pauses, unexpected losses of temper, and, at times, flashes of poignancy. His technique, always deft and underplayed, is one of exposure rather than outright criticism.

Given his mounting popularity, it is not surprising he should have turned to television. But apparently the authorities have decreed that there's nothing very funny about a guy just standing up, in a plain business suit, talking to himself for a half-hour. In an effort to make Newhart's material more "visual," he has been obliged to work skits, costumes, and props into his usual routine. While there is always something witty in whatever he does, the imaginary tends, when it is broadened, to take on a specificity which encumbers rather than enhances his material. But during those few moments when Newhart does stand alone, and we must struggle with our own images, he is superb—the very best of the stouthearted band of cerebral comics. In those moments, he is the very incarnation of the human end-product of mass civilization. Probably we should be grateful for those glimpses of pure Newhart rather than critical of the junk with which he has been surrounded on his show.

MRS. G. GOES TO COLLEGE

CBS
WEDNESDAYS, 9:30-10 P.M. EST

BERG

Two charmers are appearing regularly on television these days. You will not find them classified among the svelte, the sophisticated, or the languorous, but Shirley Booth and Gertrude Berg shower warmth, vitality, and, most important, genuineness, in their respective television series.

In "Mrs. G. Goes to College," the indefatigable "Molly" Berg plays a widowed grandmother who takes leave of her family to enter the academic world—as a freshman. In this collegiate saga there are subtlety and credibility, and in Mrs. Berg's performance there is wit tempered with the wisdom and *tristesse* of her middle-aged endeavor. Sir Cedric Hardwicke, as the exchange professor from Cambridge, mixes a mellow brand of philosophy with his teaching of English. The encounters of these two professionals, plus good scripts (many of which, by the way, are written by her son, Cherney Berg) and a fine supporting cast, make for enjoyable viewing most of the time.

HAZEL

NBC
THURSDAYS, 9:30-10 P.M. EST

BOOTH

Shirley Booth is as well known to theatergoers as Ted Key's "Hazel" is to readers of the "Saturday Evening Post." Miss Booth has had an eye on this earthy parlor maid for some time. "Hazel," she says, "is a wonderful character. She has warmth and a spirit that is touching. She is sad, too, and the shell of hardness she wears is only to protect her. She's really a delightful person to know."

Often involved with children and dogs in her brusque, no-nonsense manner, she usually sides with them in their skirmishes with mere—and often bewildered and outwitted—adults. In the weekly melee, Miss Booth has as her cohorts Don De Fore, Bobby Buntrock, and Whitney Blake. The show is only a situation comedy, but the presence of Miss Booth illuminates the ordinary with rare talent.

"The dramatic mill in Hollywood has run dry," says Ted Yates, who produces "David Brinkley's Journal." "They've run out of plots and the public has grown tired of those they still have. Newton Minow also stimulated interest in the documentary, bringing about administrative action by the networks. And people—people are beginning to watch. They're conscious of television's voids. Then you have to consider that the documentary offers exceptional freedom. We can do things other shows can't touch. If dramatic television had the kind of freedom we have, it would be a tremendous force today. The creative talents are moving into the documentary field. It's the only place to work today."

Which is, perhaps, the long way of saying that the documentaries represent the greatest growth stock in television today—creatively *and* economically. They come in infinite variety, and in widely varying degrees of quality. But the best of them, week in, week out, represent television's most consistently successful attempt to provide "quality" viewing on a regular basis.

Brinkley's "Journal" (NBC; Wednesdays, 10:30-11 P.M. EST) is trying hard to keep spoken commentary to a minimum, and, by adroit editing of generally excellent photography, succeeds in making its biggest and best points visually. This is good, because Brinkley's commentary tends to be unbearably moralistic, without giving any evidence of especially subtle thinking to back it up. The December schedule offers "Normandy" (December 6), a description of the great invasion by an American veteran and a German. Europe's avant-garde painters and children's art are the subject on December 13. On December 20, "Food for Peace" evaluates the effects of America's distribution of food to our allies.

The closest thing to Brinkley's "Journal" is ABC's "Bell & Howell Close-Up!" Thus far, it has been a noble experiment in contemporary documentation. Its producers use hand-held cameras and sound recorded on the spot to give immediacy to their reporting. The effect is sometimes excellent. But more often than not one feels the need of a controlling intelligence functioning critically to separate the essentials from the merely immediate. The December schedule, as usual, will be flexible, depending on how the news breaks.

"The Twentieth Century" (CBS; Sundays, 6-6:30 P.M. EST), oldest of the regularly scheduled documentaries, remains the best. In the past, it has done very little special shooting, depending for its footage on film libraries. Now about half the film is new. What it does, better than anyone, is edit film brilliantly, attach to it intelligent commentary, and, in general, cover more ground in greater depth than any other documentary. In its willingness to explore odd trails ranging over almost every area of human endeavor, it knows no peer. In December it will offer "The Man Who Spied on Pearl Harbor" (December 3), "Willkie" (December 17), "The Great Weather Mystery" (December 24), and "The Jazz of Dave Brubeck" on New Year's Eve.

The narrator of "The Twentieth Century" is Walter Cronkite, who performs the same chore on "Eyewitness" (Fridays, 10:30-11 P.M. EST), a game try by CBS at doing documentaries on subjects which are at the top of the news at air time. It's obviously almost impossible to put together a visually satisfying film of almost feature length in a few days' time. There is nothing wrong with the series from an informational standpoint; the trouble is that all too often the eye begins to wander as the rather conventional footage unwinds. And, as all documentarians should know, when the eye begins to drift, the mind soon follows. It is, of course, unfair to judge "Eyewitness" by the standards applied to shows which have more time to get ready. "Eyewitness" is usually well worth eyewitnessing.

It may be, indeed, that the current popularity of documentaries is the result of their shining contrast to the rest of television. More probable, however, is the theory that they are riding one of the main currents of American thought, the belief that time spent on fiction is a sinful waste, while any entertainment wrapped in the mantle of fact is likely to have great moral appeal. Be that as it may, artistically the documentarians may be reaching toward the kind of ideal television form which is so desperately needed by a groping industry.

CRONKITE

BRINKLEY

YATES

OTHERS TO KEEP AN EYE ON:

CARNEY

SANDRO MORRICONI

MOFFO

"Frontiers of Faith." For two Sundays, a question of semantics occupies Mark Van Doren and Maurice Samuel. The question: traditional versus modern translations of the Bible. NBC; November 26 and December 3, 1:30-2 P.M. EST.

Yves Montand, who represents one school of thought, and John Raitt, who is a devotee of quite another, combine their thinking in an as yet untitled salute to memorable musical moments of Broadway. ABC; Thursday, November 30, 10-11 P.M. EST.

"Rawhide." Burgess Meredith plays a pioneer conservationist in a remarkably quiet interlude in this usually noisy pistol-shot series. The title is "Incident of the Little Fishes." CBS; Friday, December 1, 7:30-8:30 P.M. EST.

"Dinah Shore Show." Miss Shore and her wardrobe on her monthly tribute to the pleasures of the relaxed life. NBC; Friday, December 1, 9:30-10:30 P.M. EST.

"Saturday Night at the Movies." Some good oldies, worth seeing again: December 2, "Broken Arrow"—you know, that old thing about Cochise; December 9, "Man on a Tightrope"—Kazan directing, Fredric March starring; December 23, "O. Henry's Full House"—an anthology with Fred Allen in one of the episodes. NBC; starts at 9 P.M. EST.

"Bell Telephone Hour." "We Two," on December 8, features famous couples (Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Peter Lind Hayes and Mary Healy, et cetera). On December 22, it's "A Trip to Christmas," Anna Moffo supplying the best of the Bell-like tones. NBC; Fridays, 9:30-10:30 P.M. EST.

"Theater 62." Another remake of an old movie, this time Selznick's "Notorious." It lacks Bergman and Grant, but it still retains much of the original involved suspense. NBC; Sunday, December 10, 10-11 P.M. EST.

"Ernie Kovacs Special." See page 80 for all the good reasons to look in on television's leading comic stylist. ABC; Tuesday, December 12, 10:30-11 P.M. EST.

"Bob Hope Special." The old master's specials still consistently hit the top of the ratings (last year, three of the top five shows were his). There's a good reason. He's funny. NBC; Wednesday, December 13, 9-10 P.M. EST.

A study of the Peace Corps. A news special which follows corpsmen from selection, through training in Puerto Rico, to their present location in Tanganyika. NBC; Friday, December 15, 9:30-10:30 P.M. EST.

"Du Pont Show of the Week." Art Carney, Barbara Cook, Alice Ghostley in "Fads and Foibles," social history told through songs—an engaging idea. The stars are fine; the big question, based on the generally disappointing record of the Du Pont show this season, is the final execution. NBC; Sunday, December 17, 10-11 P.M. EST.

"Twilight Zone." More exercises in pretense under the aegis of Rod Serling. Susan Harrison appears in "Five Characters in Search of an Exit" on December 22; "The Quality of Mercy" is scheduled for December 29. The war drama features Dean Stockwell and Albert Salmi. CBS; Fridays, 10-10:30 P.M. EST.

"Jack Benny." Another great old pro. On December 17, Dimitri Tiomkin, the Hollywood composer, appears in "Jack Writes a Song." On December 24, there's a Christmas show. CBS; Sundays, 9:30-10 P.M. EST.

"Frank McGee's Here and Now." McGee's reading of the birth of Christ from the Bible is illustrated by joyous drawings of the nativity by children from New York City's St. George's Church Sunday school. NBC; Friday, December 22, 10:30-11 P.M. EST.

"Direction '62." Paul Horgan's lovely little book "The Saintmaker's Christmas Eve," a tale of Mexico in the nineteenth century, is dramatized. ABC; Sunday, December 24, 12:30-1:30 P.M. EST.

"The Nation's Future." The best of the discussion shows gives viewers a thirty-minute discussion of an important issue by national leaders, followed by thirty minutes of astute questioning by an audience invited because of its special interest. NBC; Sunday, December 24, 5-6 P.M. EST.

"Du Pont Show of the Week." Fred Waring and half a hundred citizens of a large Eastern state give vent to their feelings about the holiday season. NBC; Sunday, December 24, 10-11 P.M. EST.

"Naked City." It's been on a long time, it's not always as good as it might be, but it's practically the only opportunity for New York actors to get on television these days, and consequently the acting often reaches real heights. Try the December 27 episode, starring James Barton, Fred Clark, and Albert Dekker. If nothing else, the Big City backgrounds are beautiful. ABC; Wednesdays, 10-11 P.M. EST.

by Donald W. LaBadie

EL CID

ALLIED ARTISTS
PRODUCER: SAMUEL BRONSTON
DIRECTOR: ANTHONY MANN
SCREENPLAY: PHILIP YORDAN
CAST: CHARLTON HESTON, SOPHIA LOREN, RAF VALLONE

HESTON

During the course of Charlton Heston's film career, dating from the time he acted in 16-mm. pictures in Chicago, he has played such varied characters of fiction, legend, and history as Peer Gynt, Macbeth, Ben-Hur, Moses, Julius Caesar, and Andrew Jackson. Mr. Heston's latest venture into living statuary is in the role of El Cid in this Technicolor movie. It is another of those forays into the olden days with, as they say, a cast of thousands. The thousands, in this instance, are happy Spanish extras who were fortunate enough to be handy and to get weeks of work as fierce warriors, serfs, and nobles of medieval Spain.

Mr. Heston, a large, handsome man with a high forehead and a great mane of hair, is an imposing figure; he seems to have picked up a slightly weighty quality from his frequent excursions into history. But his sense of humor is wry. Naturally, he has developed a lively interest in the art of bringing off a historical movie.

"What the director's got to do in one of these pictures, first of all, is somehow to avoid drowning his characters in the very spectacular qualities that make it a historical film. When I study for one of these roles, I try to catch the way people actually reacted. I try to put myself enough in their shoes to be able to think the way they presumably thought. One of the biggest problems is to re-create the way they spoke. If the script-writer simply falls back on 'thou' and 'thee,' history is liable to turn into a never-never land. He has to find some compromise between ancient and contemporary language.

"In working in this area, I've had to develop some odd skills. But if you're going to be in the movies, you work under the conditions that prevail. It's better to learn the special things, like riding a horse, and to learn them well. If you don't, you're liable to project less history than sheer terror.

"For the moment, I'm saying good-bye to the past and hello to a light comedy. It's set in modern Italy, and is called 'Easter Dinner.' The name is tentative—with that title and with me in it, audiences could think it's about the Last Supper."

LA NOTTE BRAVA

MILLER PRODUCING
DIRECTOR: MAURO BOLOGNINI
SCREENPLAY: PIER PAOLO PASOLINI
MUSIC: PIERO PICCIONI
CAST: LAURENT TERZIEFF, JEAN CLAUDE BRIALY, ANTONELLA LUALDI, ELSA MARTINELLI

FROM A ROMAN BALCONY

CONTINENTAL DISTRIBUTING
PRODUCER: PAUL GRAETZ
DIRECTOR: MAURO BOLOGNINI
SCREENPLAY: ALBERTO MORAVIA, PIER PAOLO PASOLINI
CAST: JEAN SOREL, LEA MASSARI, JEANNE VALERIE, RIK BATTAGLIA

LUALDI MARTINELLI

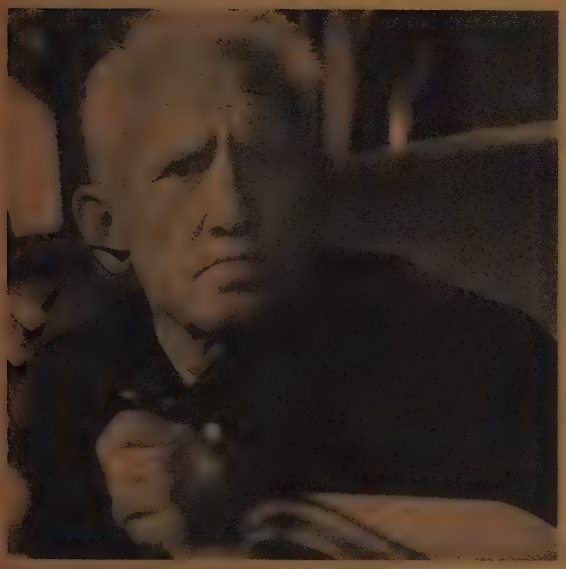
Of all the major film industries in the world, the Italian movie-makers are out in front today by virtue of the sheer excitement they have created with such works as "L'Avventura," "La Dolce Vita," and "Rocco and His Brothers." In the United States, we have come to know Antonioni, Fellini, and Visconti. Now we are introduced to Mauro Bolognini. "La Notte Brava" and "From a Roman Balcony" have been bought by American distributors. A third Bolognini film, "Il Bell' Antonio," should be on view in the near future.

At thirty-eight, Bolognini is not among the majors; he belongs with Rossi, Zurlini, and a number of other relatively young directors whose movies we may expect to see if the Italian boom continues. Of these two films, "From a Roman Balcony" is the more honest; and possibly owes a little of its tenor to the movies of neorealists like De Sica and Rossellini. In fact, it has a touch of "The Bicycle Thief" in its story, which is concerned with the struggle of a poor young man to find a job in Rome. The boy is played, not by an Italian, but by a very talented young French actor named Jean Sorel. If you have wondered what happened to Valerie Ciangottini, the pure young girl in "La Dolce Vita," you will find her here, playing another innocent.

"La Notte Brava" is something else again. A slice of Roman life, an episodic melodrama, it has a bit of the air of a miniature "La Dolce Vita." The life is lower class, but the sexual encounters are equally promiscuous. In staging his panorama, Bolognini allows his lowlifes to come into brief contact with a high-class nymphomaniac and some homosexuals, all on the prowl for the cruder qualities of their social inferiors. This is a nihilistic film, which seems less intent on social or spiritual criticism than on mere sensationalism, an intent it carries out with a certain degree of style. There are particularly excellent performances from French actor Laurent Terzieff as a sad-eyed Roman tough; from Franco Interlenghi, who once played one of the children in "Shoe-Shine," as a sneaky hoodlum; and from Antonella Lualdi and Elsa Martinelli as two snarling prostitutes. These ladies could give Melina Mercouri a lesson or two in what it's really like to walk the streets.

JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG

UNITED ARTISTS
PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR: STANLEY KRAMER
SCREENPLAY: ABBY MANN
CAST: SPENCER TRACY, RICHARD WIDMARK, BURT LANCASTER, MARLENE DIETRICH, JUDY GARLAND, MAXIMILIAN SCHELL, MONTGOMERY CLIFT



TRACY

"Judgment at Nuremberg" is one of those heavily important pictures, complete with a message, which represents the latter-day style of Stanley Kramer. (See page 8 for Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s extended critical analysis of the film.) Mr. Kramer used to deliver his messages via simple, low-budget dramas like "Champion" and "Home of the Brave," but in recent years he has specialized in the all-star blockbuster such as "Not as a Stranger" and "On the Beach." In his current film, he has assembled a cast so impressive you may find yourself waiting to see who's going to appear next. The actors play out in three hours and twenty minutes what was originally a crisp hour-and-a-half television show.

In the opinion of Abby Mann, who wrote both the original television script and the film adaptation, the changes made have been all for the better. "I think this is Hollywood at its best. It's certainly the kind of film I want to do here. There are few enough turned out. This is a sad place, and really good directors are rare. Not that TV is any better now. What do you have? So-called classics like 'Requiem for a Heavyweight' and 'Little Moon of Alban.' What do they have to do with the world around us? Artists won't fight any more for significant scripts. They run for cover too quickly. It's a question of whether you're going to do drama or melodrama. Drama makes people examine the world they live in; melodrama leads them to accept."

One of the most effective scenes in "Judgment at Nuremberg" is less drama or melodrama than propaganda film. It employs the kind of cross-cutting techniques Leni Riefenstahl used so effectively in her documentaries for Adolf Hitler, and, making a full circle, Mr. Kramer uses it to strike a harsh blow at our erstwhile enemies. The scene is a typically Teutonic café. Marlene Dietrich, as a Prussian aristocrat, is denying to Spencer Tracy that ordinary Germans knew anything about the horror camps. "We did not know," she says imploringly; the camera shifts to a gross, sweating singer raising his stein in a boisterous toast. "How could we have known?" she asks, her delicate face turned upward in supplication, and the camera picks up a group of Germans, swaying together in a sinister, almost ritualistic fashion, a herd in waltz time. Riefenstahl might have been proud of it.

ZAZIE DANS LE METRO

DIRECTOR: LOUIS MALLE
SCREENPLAY: LOUIS MALLE, JEAN-PAUL RAPPENEAU
CAST: CATHERINE DEMONGEOT, PHILIPPE NOIRET, VITTORIO CAPRIOLI, YVONNE CLECH

NOIRET DEMONGEOT

"Zazie Dans le Métro" is Louis Malle's wild, inventive adaptation of the popular French novel by poet and humorist Raymond Queneau. The plot is no more than a series of mad adventures, peopled by characters right out of "Alice in Wonderland." Zazie is a nine-year-old, left by her mother with her aunt and uncle during a first visit to Paris. Uncle Gabriel is a female impersonator, Aunt Albertine is fond of donning a motorcyclist's uniform. Zazie's one wish is to see the Métro, the Paris subway, but this is the one thing she does *not* do. She is pursued by a lecherous fraudulent policeman, Pedro Surplus; she becomes involved with a nymphomaniac widow in a classic Paris traffic jam while trying to save her uncle, who has been kidnaped on a tourist bus; she nods and dozes while around her a restaurant is demolished, walls and all, in a confused brawl. When, in the final scene, her mother asks what kind of time she has had in Paris, Zazie replies: "I've mellowed." Queneau's book was distinguished by his own version, almost impossible to translate, of Paris argot. The characters on the screen still speak this distinctive French; the subtitles are just slangy.

As a director, M. Malle is nothing if not eclectic. His first film was the taut thriller "Frantic." His second was the moody, romantic drama "The Lovers." This, his third, might have borne the title of the first. It is a bawdy, surrealistic comedy, full of visual tricks and audio surprises, now suggesting Mack Sennett, then again Georges Méliès, the pioneer of Gallic film fantasy. Characters disappear and reappear in different guises; voices are distorted on the sound track; there are parodies of "Hiroshima, Mon Amour," and even "The Lovers." This is all, as a matter of fact, too much. The gags—good, bad, and indifferent—tumble one over the other; the "inside," precocious jokes grow irritating. Finally, when the climactic restaurant brawl comes around, there is a distinct sense of strain—such as one might feel with a raucous drinking companion who seemed hilarious only an alcoholic hour before. Still, as a kind of cinematic grab bag, the picture offers more than enough favors for everyone. One of the better draws: Zazie on a balcony, doing a take-off on De Gaulle, the leader's voice issuing from her childish lips with disconcerting grandeur.

POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES

UNITED ARTISTS
PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR: FRANK CAPRA
STORY: DAMON RUNYON
SCREENPLAY: HAL KANTOR, HARRY TUGEND
CAST: BETTE DAVIS, GLENN FORD, HOPE LANGE, PETER FALK, MICKEY SHAUGHNESSY

FALK DAVIS SHAUGHNESSY

DAVIS CAPRA

"Pocketful of Miracles" is a 1961 version of "Lady for a Day," one of Frank Capra's memorable movies of the 1930's. It remains a peculiarly thirties movie, and not only because the Damon Runyon story takes place on his beloved Broadway at the end of the Prohibition era. It has an appeal, rare today, that cuts across audience tastes; conceivably, it could please a college professor as much as a drugstore clerk. It is the kind of picture for which Hollywood was once noted: a warm, entertaining fairy tale, plausible enough to allow the spectator to suspend disbelief. Among the supporting players are a host of actors who were practically a motion picture stock company of their own in the thirties: Edward Everett Horton, John Litel, Barton MacLane, Jerome Cowan, and George E. Stone, among others. The sole concession to the sixties is the presence in the cast of a banshee-voiced young singer called Ann-Margret, who wails out a rocked and rolled arrangement of a folk song which could not have sounded more anachronistic in Queen Victoria's drawing room.

Mr. Capra and his star, Bette Davis, were fixtures in the Hollywood thirties landscape. At sixty-four and fifty-three, respectively, they are among the most alive and creative figures in American movies. Since the War, Mr. Capra has worked only spasmodically. His finest films were made before 1942: "It Happened One Night," "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," and "Meet John Doe," to name only a few. Miss Davis has been in many movies since the War, including "All About Eve," but has made no movies in the last five years. For both of them, the Hollywood of 1961 is a changed place.

"It's simple to say that Hollywood isn't like it once was, but the world's changing, and Hollywood's reacting to the world," Miss Davis said recently, backstage at New York's Belasco Theater, where she was rehearsing the new Tennessee Williams play, "Night of the Iguana." She still fascinates visitors with the bright, nervous smile, the husky voice, the cigarette she uses as a prop. "There's an apathy, but you find that now in all the performing arts. There are fewer films and everything's been dispersed, including the actors. Who knows?—maybe it's been good for us all to have been scattered like gypsies.

"I adore making pictures; it was my basic training, and it isn't that I can't find work. It's just that at my age there are fewer and fewer suitable parts. You spend twenty-five years building up a reputation as a star; you can't accept roles in another category. One or two pictures, and you'd remain there. Oh, I've been offered all kinds of roles—hillbilly crones and even the part of Burt Lancaster's mother in 'The Unforgiven'; Lillian Gish finally played it. I wasn't quite ready for that, so I withstood the temptation of the money.

"Then Frank offered me Apple Annie in 'Pocketful,' and I took it. It was a hard role for me, apart from the fact that I had to play a monumental hag. It lacked a reality I'm used to. I had to find a way to make it real and yet to fit myself into the fairy-tale spirit of the picture. It was like walking a tightrope."

Frank Capra, a quiet, thoughtful man distinguished by an almost courtly manner, finds the change in the movie colony more radical: "Writers and directors in 1961 are making films for each other, not for audiences. They seem to be afraid to touch themes that deal with human goodness. All the young people are going in for deep psychological drama. The trend is all-important out here. Someone makes a different kind of film and someone else says: 'That's good, let's do the same thing.' But the best films aren't made by imitators. They're made by strong, creative individuals. One man has to dominate a picture; that's the only way a film ever has unity. Motion pictures were started by strong people, gutty pioneers. We haven't developed too many of their kind in recent years. Maybe the new lions will turn out to be some of these fellows who are making pictures completely on their own. I think all screwballs should be encouraged.

"I've always wanted to remake 'Lady for a Day.' I never felt that the effect on the other characters of the change in Apple Annie from a hard-bitten old witch to a gracious old lady was sufficiently dramatized. Now I'm telling the story in terms of really hard people affected by a kind act. Get involved with kindness and something rubs off. You can call it a human comedy. Columbia didn't want to remake it; they thought it was old-fashioned. But audiences haven't really changed. They're hungry for positive ideas. People have written to me over the years, begging for the old-style pictures.

"You can't overemphasize the audience; they're the third dimension. You don't know what you've got in a film until they see it. Take the case of 'Lost Horizon.' We licked our chops at the studio when we first saw it; we thought we had a big hit. Then we sneaked it at Santa Barbara. The picture—and it was serious—had been on five minutes when people began to laugh. The laughs got bigger and bigger, and then I heard someone behind me say, 'Did you ever see such a gol-dang thing as they're showing here?' I got up and walked out. The next day I looked at the picture again. I suddenly knew that the trouble lay in the first few reels. We sneaked it again at Long Beach, beginning with the third reel. It was an immediate success. I went back to Hollywood and burned those first two reels. If you were to ask me today what was in them, I really couldn't tell you."

MODERATO CANTABILE

KINGSLEY-INTERNATIONAL
PRODUCER: RAOUL J. LEVY
DIRECTOR: PETER BROOK
SCREENPLAY: MARGUERITE DURAS, GERARD JARIOT, PETER BROOK
CAST: JEANNE MOREAU, JEAN-PAUL BELMONDO, DIDIER HAUDEPIN

MOREAU BROOK

MOREAU BELMONDO

"Moderato Cantabile" is peculiarly a film of the sixties. Director Peter Brook has himself called it "an anti-audience film." In this quality, it shares something with "Hiroshima, Mon Amour," "Breathless," "The Connection," and "L'Avventura." It demands that the moviegoer perceive the picture's meaning for himself without having it spelled out for him. In Europe, it has been damned as much as it has been praised. Some critics have complained that its pace is deadly, that nothing much happens, that it is difficult to tell what it's really about. If those criticisms sound familiar, it is because they are the same ones that have been leveled against "L'Avventura." Others have regarded it as a work of art which strips away dramatic falsehoods to get down to bare truth. "Moderato Ca[illegible] part of a contemporary rebellion against t[illegible] of trying to communicate reality on film.

Mr. Brook is a slight, dapper Englishma[illegible] directed only one film, "The Beggar's Opera[illegible] for his stage productions, among them "Ring[illegible] the Broadway musical "Irma la Douce." Fol[illegible] hearsal of "Irma" recently, Mr. Brook said of [illegible] "God knows, it's been damned, but it has a v[illegible] heart. If people tell me they loved 'Irma la [illegible] me a bit of satisfaction, no more than if they[illegible] turning out a well-designed, efficient engine. [illegible] interest me. But if someone tells me he liked [illegible] I'm fascinated, and he's won a friend for life.

"I first got interested in 'Moderato' when I read Marguerite Duras's novel. She had already done the script for 'Hiroshima, Mon Amour,' and agreed to write with me. Then I'd wanted to work with Jeanne Moreau again ever since I directed her on the Paris stage in 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,' and she was perfect for the woman. The story on the surface was very simple. The wife of an industrialist and one of her husband's employees meet in a small town. They have a few encounters. At one meeting she begs him to see her once more, and deserts her husband and guests for a rendezvous. The young man rejects her again and leaves the town. This is the surface, and the couple barely touch each other physically, but underneath there are violent feelings involved. What I wanted to do was to photograph an immense emotional experience between two people without resorting to the usual cinema tricks: I mean, a line of dialogue, a burst of music, a sudden movement of the camera, all the old familiars.

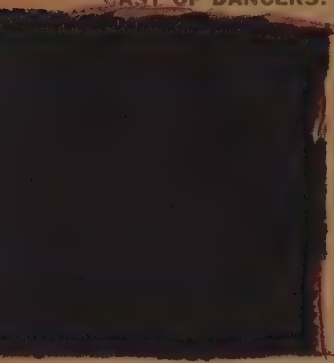
"True cinema, I think, lies in catching the unexpected moment. An audience can smell the difference between something staged and something being photographed at the moment it's happening. In films, you want to capture that thing that only happens once. Therefore, unlike the theater, rehearsals are bad. What I did was to try to get Belmondo and Moreau into the climate of the film. I let them rehearse scenes that weren't in the script, but that might have been part of the background of their characters. With Moreau, it was easy. She's antianalytical. She gets to know her parts indirectly, irrationally. You might almost say she's like a medium. What I wanted them to be able to do finally was to re-create their characters' natural states in any given scene. If an actor can get that true state, his actions in a scene will follow naturally. There are little things one simply can't direct: a glance, the movement of an arm, the exact timing. These make for the spontaneous, the unexpected moment, the thing that only happens once.

"This may all sound like the Method, but it really isn't. Ultimately, the Method comes back to psychoanalysis; it wants to make the characters predictable. And that's what I don't want. It takes the mystery out of life; it kills creation. That's been the trouble with films up to now. They've been the victims of the false arrogance of the script-writer who feels that he knows his characters through and through, who can predict every action. In French literature, novelists like Robbe-Grillet have rebelled against just this sort of omniscience and gone to another extreme. They say: 'I know nothing. I can tell you how my character was dressed, what kind of chair he sat on, what was the color of the label on his beer bottle.' Duras and 'Moderato Cantabile' lie somewhere in between."

Mr. Brook drew a breath. "This is an exciting time in films. A rightful rejection of the false gods is in full swing. And it's television that's helping to create a new cinema audience. It's mercilessly exposing all the film clichés by repetition. Another thing it's doing is to give the spectator back his objectivity. You tune in, say, to an interview program, and you see a strange man sitting there. You don't know him, so you have to make your own judgment as to what he is; no one's going to tell you. It creates in you an attitude that's much more adult and independent than if the information had been given to you secondhand; you've become an active rather than a passive spectator."

CINDERELLA

JANUS FILMS
DIRECTORS AND PRODUCERS: ALEXANDER ROW, ROSTISLAV ZAKHAROV
CHOREOGRAPHY: ROSTISLAV ZAKHAROV
MUSIC: SERGEI PROKOFIEV
CAST OF DANCERS: RAISA STRUCHKOVA, GENNADY LEDYAKH, ELENA VANKE



FOR SPECIAL TASTES:

For ballet lovers and children. This is the fifth of the handsomely photographed stage productions of the Bolshoi Ballet to reach the United States. At the time he was working on the score, Prokofiev wrote an article for the Russian press in which he set forth his problems in creating the music for "Cinderella." The difficulty, he said, was to combine his own sense of the wonder and magic of the fairy tale with the producers' express desire to have it "serve merely as a setting for the portrayal of flesh-and-blood human beings with human passions and failings." In the film, at least, magic and wonder win out, particularly in the marvelous journey of the Prince (danced with infectious athleticism by Ledyakh) around the world in search of his lost dancing partner. "Cinderella" will give balletomanes a close-up view of Raisa Struchkova, who, with Ulanova and Plisetskaya, is one of the Bolshoi's three *première* ballerinas.

SUMMER AND SMOKE

PARAMOUNT
PRODUCER: HAL WALLIS
DIRECTOR: PETER GLENVILLE
SCREENPLAY: JAMES POE
CAST: GERALDINE PAGE, LAURENCE HARVEY, UNA MERKEL, RITA MORENO

GLENVILLE PAGE MERKEL

For admirers of Tennessee Williams. "Summer and Smoke" may be the most fragile of all Williams' plays; the "smoke" in the title refers to the elusiveness of the spirit. On Broadway, in 1948, the play did indeed prove too fragile for the production it received. It came into its own several years later, when it was given the simplest of renderings at Greenwich Village's Circle in the Square. The particular glory of that offering was Geraldine Page's performance as Alma, an inarticulate young woman turning too quickly into a spinster. Producer Wallis engaged Miss Page to repeat her original role when he made the movie. This time Alma is enhanced (or not, according to your taste) by a wide screen and a Hollywood re-creation of the pre-World War I period in the deep South. Opposite Miss Page is Laurence Harvey, a sought-after leading man, and in the background Rita Moreno clicks her castanets.

LOSS OF INNOCENCE

COLUMBIA
PRODUCERS: VICTOR SAVILLE, EDWARD SMALL
DIRECTOR: LEWIS GILBERT
SCREENPLAY: HOWARD KOCH
CAST: KENNETH MORE, DANIELLE DARRIEUX, SUSANNAH YORK, CLAUDE NOLLIER, DAVID SAIRE

YORK SAIRE

For those who are stimulated by moderately frank stories of pretty, sensitive English girls learning the facts of life abroad. "Loss of Innocence" cannot properly be called a family picture; an unsubtle Lesbian relationship, an affair between an international jewel thief and one of the Lesbians, and an attempted rape make it a bit too gamy. Still, its picture-postcard colors, well-bred English children, and tourist trips through the French countryside suggest that the producers had several audiences in mind.

The script is based on Rumer Godden's novel "The Greengage Summer." Miss Godden has explored the effects of foreign climes on the British in such other novels, later made into movies, as "The River" and "Black Narcissus." Taking her first real step toward stardom is a sturdy blonde named Susannah York, who looks a bit too much like a Girl Scout ever to be as tantalizing as the heroine is intended to be.

by Louis S. Miano

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA

AUTHOR: TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
CAST: BETTE DAVIS, MARGARET LEIGHTON, PATRICK O'NEAL, ALAN WEBB
DIRECTOR: FRANK CORSARO
SETS: OLIVER SMITH
LIGHTING: JEAN ROSENTHAL
PRODUCER: CHARLES BOWDEN

TRYOUT: CHICAGO, NOV. 21-DEC. 23, BLACKSTONE THEATER
OPENS: NEW YORK, DEC. 28, ROYALE THEATER

BROADWAY

Like most of Tennessee Williams' major plays, "The Night of the Iguana," in the words of its producer, Charles Bowden, "grows out of seeds from the past." The play takes its title and some minor incidents from a short story Williams wrote about 1946. Its first reworking into theatrical form was a long one-act piece written for the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, in 1959. Frank Corsaro, who staged the play in Spoleto, also directed an expanded version in Miami last year, as well as the present production, which will have spent two months on the road before its New York opening. Before production began, the producer received bits and pieces of rewrites from Williams on hotel stationery from all over the world.

"You know how they say works of art flow out of people? Well, this play has been bleeding out of Williams," Bowden says. "I think it's the culmination of Tennessee's life and work. It's full of hope and the understanding of how to live with despair. 'Iguana' shows that true love is not just sympathy for someone's obsessions but for the loneliness that the obsession causes.

"The play is very personal to Williams. It takes courage to say to the world, 'Look, here is my heart,' knowing that the world can turn around and tell you what you can do with it."

The setting is the veranda of the Costa Verde Hotel on a hillside near the small Mexican town of Puerto Barrio. The time is 1940.

The owner-manager of the hotel is Maxine Faulk, a darkly tanned and lusty American lady who has been recently widowed. This is Bette Davis' first dramatic role on Broadway in twenty-five years. Although it is not the most important part in the play, Miss Davis requested it because she felt it was specifically suited to her talents.

"Better to have a smaller part in a Williams play than the lead in something not as good," she says. "Williams had originally wanted me as Blanche in 'Streetcar' but I'd just had a baby and couldn't. Then he talked to me about 'Sweet Bird of Youth,' and I couldn't do that, either. So you see, Tennessee and I have had this date for a long time."

Margaret Leighton plays Hannah Jelkes, a gentle artist from Nantucket who arrives at the hotel, penniless, with her grandfather (Alan Webb) after years of traveling around the world. (Bowden describes Maxine as "ninety per cent earth" and Hannah as "ninety per cent air.")

The most important arrival at the Costa Verde is Shannon, a discredited minister from Virginia, who is now a tourist guide. He is played by Patrick O'Neal, who appeared last season as Kim Stanley's brother-in-law in "A Far Country" and who has been with "Iguana" since its beginnings in Spoleto.

The Virginian arrives at the Costa Verde seeking refuge from the aggressive schoolmarms he has been escorting and from his own private "spook." Maxine and Hannah offer their own brands of solace—one elemental, one spiritual. The subtle conflicts between Shannon and the two women are played out against a background of soft voices and quick violence: Grandfather continuously recites a poem he is writing; an iguana is captured, escapes, and is caught again; and a troupe of robust Germans march through periodically, listening to radio reports of the bombing of London as a reminder of the grim world beyond Puerto Barrio.

Bowden has a strong sense of mission about the play. He says, "I want to have the intent of Tennessee's work seen undistorted by an overmasterful director or designer. His plays always allow for the creative contributions of the others involved, but I want to be sure all the elements fit together smoothly into a unified whole. The long tour is to point up and distill the performances and the play. With Williams, it's not so much a matter of cutting as of compressing and texturing."

"Cutting must be done delicately," the playwright insists. "Sometimes something ineffable gets lost in the shuffle when you cut. You know, the first reading of a play is like a castration ceremony, when everybody sits around and emasculates the playwright. Maybe I worry too much about pleasing audiences and producers and directors. That's why I admire the young writers like Albee, Gelber, and Kopit. They don't give a damn about anybody else and they don't give a damn about the movie sale. They just try to please themselves by communicating with other people.

"But I do want my work to be liked, although sometimes I think audiences just come to see what new outrage I've committed. I'm very sensitive about my writing. It's all I have, and I love it, and so I keep on with it."

DUANE MICHALS

O'NEAL

WALT SILVER

WILLIAMS

TAKE HER, SHE'S MINE

AUTHORS: PHOEBE AND HENRY EPHRON
CAST: ART CARNEY, PHYLLIS THAXTER
DIRECTOR: GEORGE ABBOTT

TRYOUT: BOSTON, DEC. 5-16, SHUBERT THEATER
OPENS: NEW YORK, DEC. 21, BILTMORE THEATER

DENNIS STOCK/MAGNUM

CARNEY

Art Carney, a versatile actor who shifts gracefully between low comedy and high drama, does a humorous turn as Frank Michaelson in this slick slice of American family life. As the play opens, the Michaelsons of Southern California are sending older daughter Mollie way out East to college.

Aided by asides from Carney, we see Mollie go from martinis and bubble coiffure to a stint of singing folk songs, swathed in beads, at a coffee shop, and finally, the inevitable "what's the use of it all?" phase. (Meanwhile, that offensive boy from Harvard, whom Mollie hated so much at first meeting, is going through his own metamorphoses. Keep an eye on *him.*)

Television fans may feel this is where they tuned in, but on the credit side there is, in addition to Carney, ethereal Elizabeth Ashley (SHOW's Double Exposure subject in November), George Abbott's direction, and the fact that it all comes together in one sitting instead of only half an hour a week.

DAUGHTER OF SILENCE

AUTHOR: MORRIS L. WEST
CAST: EMLYN WILLIAMS, RIP TORN, IRENE DAILEY, JANET MARGOLIN
DIRECTOR: VINCENT J. DONEHUE
SETS: OLIVER SMITH
PRODUCER: RICHARD HALLIDAY

OPENS: NEW YORK, NOV. 30, MUSIC BOX THEATER

FRIEDMAN-ABELES

MARGOLIN TORN

The curtain rises on Morris West's own adaptation of his new novel, "Daughter of Silence," in the quiet square of a small town in northern Italy, near Siena. It is midday, and the sun is hot and bright. Anna, a slender young girl, enters and calls the mayor of the town out from a restaurant where he is having lunch. When he steps outside, she fires five bullets into him.

According to director Vincent Donehue, like producer Halliday a "Sound of Music" alumnus, the trial that follows is a catalyst that precipitates change in the lives of all involved. Anna, the "daughter" of the title, and the whole town have been silent about an event that took place eleven years before the shooting.

The defense lawyer, Carlo Rienzi (Rip Torn), defies his father-in-law for the first time by taking the case. This is Signor Ascolini (Emlyn Williams), one of Italy's most brilliant legal minds.

"There is the conflict of age and youth between them," says Donehue. "Ascolini's daughter, Valeria [played by Irene Dailey, sister of Hollywood's Dan], because of her father, is also in conflict with Carlo. Come to think of it, there are conflicts between *all* the people in this play.

"But Carlo is the central figure of the piece. In Greek terms, he's a man with an Achilles' heel, or tragic flaw. He grows to great proportions in the course of the play but he also destroys because of the flaw, and is almost destroyed by it."

The chance to play Anna may make actress Janet Margolin this season's Cinderella. The young New Yorker spent last summer building and painting scenery and watching over the props at the Shakespeare Festival in Central Park. She was chosen from more than two hundred actresses who read for Messrs. West, Halliday, and Donehue. Miss Margolin is cautious about discussing the role, since Anna's character is closely tied to the play's "surprise" denouement.

"Anna is strange because of something that has happened in her past," explains the actress. "She's maladjusted and emotional. It's a taxing role, with moments of great physical and emotional violence. As a matter of fact, I was bruised all over during rehearsals. It's quite a long way from the sweet young things I've played in the past."

Mr. West's earlier novel, "The Devil's Advocate," adapted by Dore Schary for the stage last season, was also set in Italy.

"West," Donehue explains, "is both fascinated and disturbed by Italy's hundreds of years of violence, passion, and all the things that people have done to one another. You might say it's a modern morality play of man's inhumanity to man and what people cover up and live on top of. I suppose what it deals with ultimately is how man learns to work out his own salvation."

MORT SAHL AT NINE O'CLOCK

PRODUCERS: ALEXANDER COHEN,
MILTON EBBINS

OPENS: NEW YORK, LATE DECEMBER,
JOHN GOLDEN THEATER

EMMA GENE HALL

SAHL

If you're used to seeing Mort Sahl through a haze of cigarette smoke, accompanied by the tinkle of alcoholic voices, be prepared to hear the master's voice at its purest this season. Sahl, one of the earliest ripples in the wave of cerebral American comics, will be seen in New York on the stage of a legitimate theater, the latest of the literate laugh-makers to appear in producer Alexander Cohen's series of "nine o'clock" entertainments. (Earlier Cohen presentations have been the English team of Flanders and Swann, and Mike Nichols and Elaine May.) Sahl's last Broadway appearance was in "The Next President" in 1958. The comedian prefers the more normal theater hours to club performances that last until early morning. In addition to his familiar monologues, Sahl will appear in sketches created by him and by writer Herb Sargent.

FIRST LOVE

AUTHOR: SAMUEL TAYLOR
CAST: ELISABETH BERGNER, HUGH O'BRIAN,
CLAUDE GERSENE
DIRECTOR: ALFRED LUNT
PRODUCERS: ROGER L. STEVENS,
FREDERICK BRISSON

TRYOUT: PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 27-DEC. 9,
NEW LOCUST STREET THEATER
OPENS: NEW YORK, DEC. 13, MOROSCO THEATER

PICTORIAL PARADE

O'BRIAN

BERGNER

In adapting the highly praised autobiographical novel by Romain Gary, "Promise at Dawn," for the stage, playwright Samuel Taylor has taken these lines of T. S. Eliot as his guide: *Time present and time past/Are both perhaps present in time future,/And time future contained in time past.*

With this poetic justification, Taylor has put on stage at the same time Gary as a boy, as an adolescent, and as a man. He steps in and out of his past, present, and future, commenting on the action and discussing the mother of them all—Nina Kacew. Mama is the familiar possessive, self-sacrificing female with dreams of glory for her only child. But Nina is a special breed. She is Russian, an ex-actress, and a fanatic Francophile. After she and Romain escape from the Bolsheviks to Poland, she tells her neighbors:

"I was born in Russia: an accident! I live in Poland: an accident! I am French! My son will be Ambassador of France! Chevalier of the Legion of Honor! The greatest of writers!"

To bring all this about, Nina works in a fish market; makes lampshades; tells fortunes, dressed as a gypsy; and poses as a Grand Duchess selling "family treasures" on consignment from antique dealers. She succeeds in getting to France. Here she goes merrily on her relentless way, even managing to get Romain enrolled in a swank tennis club under the patronage of King Gustav V of Sweden.

During World War II, Romain joins the Free French forces; and even when he is in battle, Mama wants the best for her boy. She advises him: "You will ask for a special assignment. To be sent to Berlin to kill Hitler....If not my son, who?"

Gary, once the French Consul General in Los Angeles, has fulfilled all of Nina Kacew's prophecies. Playing the mature Gary is Hugh O'Brian, late of Tombstone, Arizona, making his Broadway dramatic debut. Mr. O'Brian, tired of hitting the television trail, had heard about the play and became so interested that he flew to Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, where Alfred Lunt, who is directing "First Love," has a dairy farm. After a long exchange of views about the play, Lunt asked him to take the lead.

Elisabeth Bergner returns to Broadway after a thirteen-year absence. Miss Bergner first appeared in New York in 1935 with enormous success in "Escape Me Never." Her European stage triumphs include "St. Joan" and "The Boy David," written for her by James Barrie. She last appeared in New York in "The Cup of Trembling" in 1948, and has since been touring the Continent and Australia. Her knowing way with a bittersweet role, and the experienced hand of Mr. Lunt, in his first directorial assignment since 1954, may give the play some of the eloquence of Gary's book.

NOT WHILE I'M EATING

SKETCHES AND LYRICS: ARTHUR SHERMAN
MUSIC: ARTHUR SIEGEL
DIRECTOR: WARREN ENTERS

OPENS: NEW YORK, FIRST WEEK IN DECEMBER, THEATER TO BE ANNOUNCED

DUANE MICHALS

SHERMAN SIEGEL

This rare off-Broadway revue does not satirize the Actors' Studio, Southern writers, Marlon Brando, or "West Side Story."

"We don't want just to be chic, 'inside,' or appeal to only a lunatic fringe audience," says Arthur Sherman, who wrote the sketches and lyrics.

"Our show deals with basic, worldly topics that everyone will understand—things that are philosophically topical; that is, not dependent on the daily headlines but important six months from now. Even the ballads have a comment and are not just boy-girl numbers. We're not trying to preach or teach but there are a lot of things that have to be said. We hope people laugh *and* examine themselves too."

Mr. Sherman's collaborator, Arthur Siegel, contributed material to Leonard Sillman's "New Faces" of 1952 and 1956, including the songs "Love Is a Simple Thing" and "Monotonous."

The title song sets the tone for the evening. One group of performers sings excitedly about the sad state of the world while another group, dining on succulent food, expresses little concern.

"The point of the song, and of the show, is that neither complacency nor hysteria is the answer," Sherman says. "We suggest a middle ground. Let's take positive action, but let's not lose our heads. Our satire ranges from gentle to outrageous. Come to think of it, I guess most of it is pretty outrageous."

Areas inspected by Sherman and Siegel are the American Medical Association, the organization man, and the whole subject of spying —"pro and con."

"We've written an astronaut marching song called 'The Gold Rush in the Sky,' says Siegel. "It will probably replace 'Up in the Air, Junior Birdmen.' Somehow, I doubt that the astronauts will adopt it."

MADAME APHRODITE

BOOK: TAD MOSEL
MUSIC AND LYRICS: JERRY HERMAN
CAST: NANCY ANDREWS
DIRECTOR: ROBERT TUROFF
PRODUCERS: HOWARD BARKER, CYNTHIA BAER, ROBERT CHAMBERS

OPENS: NEW YORK, DEC. 27, ORPHEUM THEATER

MARTHA SWOPE

ANDREWS

The production team that brought the long-running off-Broadway operetta "Little Mary Sunshine" to an unsuspecting world has another surprise in store this fall. But their "Madame Aphrodite" is neither a spoof nor even a musical per se.

"It's a play with music," explains coproducer Cynthia Baer. "In other words, singing will come naturally as part of a character. Only people who have some color sing. The characters that don't have music in them don't sing."

The work is the joint effort of two people now associated with recent achievements uptown. Tad Mosel, the author, was the adapter of last season's never-say-die "All the Way Home." The music and lyrics are by Jerry Herman, who provided the same for "Milk and Honey," his first Broadway show, which opened in October. "Madame Aphrodite" actually antedates both these projects, having started as a television play Mr. Mosel wrote in 1953.

The lady of the title (played by Nancy Andrews) is described as a "cosmetic charlatan on a grand scale." A bitter and worldly woman, she holds court in a seedy bar frequented by love- and beauty-seeking women who buy her outlandish concoctions. She hires a young man, who wanders into the bar one day, to help sell her line. Although he has a history of hard knocks, he is still unspoiled, and tries hard to sell Madame's wares honestly. She soon puts him wise, however, to the wicked ways of the world *and* of the cosmetics industry.

Despite her character, or because of it, Madame Aphrodite is obviously the apple of her producers' eyes.

"She's a tigress with a lot of imagination," Miss Baer says. "That's her beauty—a fabulous imagination. You might say she's a combination of Medea and the Madwoman of Chaillot with just a drop of Sophie Tucker."

WHAT'S PLAYING

THEATER

ON THE BOARDS

BROADWAY

A COOK FOR MR. GENERAL
Bill Travers stars in a new comedy.
Playhouse Theater, 137 W. 48th St.

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS
Paul Scofield as Sir Thomas More in Robert Bolt's drama.
ANTA Theater, 245 W. 52nd St.

AN EVENING WITH YVES MONTAND
One-man show.
John Golden Theater, 252 W. 45th St.

A SHOT IN THE DARK
Julie Harris in a new comedy directed by Harold Clurman.
Booth Theater, 222 W. 45th St.

BLOOD, SWEAT AND STANLEY POOLE
An Army comedy with Darren McGavin and Peter Fonda.
Morosco Theater, 217 W. 45th St.

CAMELOT
King Arthur's Court, Julie Andrews, and Lerner and Loewe.
Majestic Theater, 245 W. 44th St.

CARNIVAL
New York Critics Award-winning musical.
Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St.

COME BLOW YOUR HORN
A comedy about New York life, with Hal March.
Brooks Atkinson Theater, 256 W. 47th St.

DO RE MI
Musical with Phil Silvers and Nancy Walker.
St. James Theater, 246 W. 44th St.

FROM THE SECOND CITY
Topical sketches in a new musical revue.
Royale Theater, 242 W. 45th St.

GIDEON
Paddy Chayefsky's comedy-drama, with Fredric March.
Plymouth Theater, 236 W. 45th St.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING
Abe Burrows' and Frank Loesser's musical comedy, with Robert Morse and Rudy Vallee.
46th St. Theater, 226 W. 46th St.

IRMA LA DOUCE
Elizabeth Seal as the sweet tart of Paris.
Alvin Theater, 250 W. 52nd St.

KEAN
Alfred Drake in a new musical.
Broadway Theater, Broadway at 53rd St.

KWAMINA
Songs by Richard Adler, book by Robert Alan Aurthur; the setting is Africa.
54th St. Theater, 152 W. 54th St.

LET IT RIDE!
George Gobel and Sam Levene in a musical derived from "Three Men on a Horse."
Eugene O'Neill Theater, 230 W. 49th St.

LOOK: WE'VE COME THROUGH
A new play by Hugh Wheeler, directed by Jose Quintero.
Hudson Theater, 141 W. 44th St.

MARY, MARY
Jean Kerr's comedy, with Barbara Bel Geddes, Barry Nelson, Michael Wilding.
Helen Hayes Theater, 210 W. 46th St.

MILK AND HONEY
A musical about Israel, with Robert Weede, Mimi Benzell, and Molly Picon.
Martin Beck Theater, 302 W. 45th St.

MY FAIR LADY
Sixth and positively last year.
Mark Hellinger Theater, Broadway at 51st St.

PURLIE VICTORIOUS
A comedy written by and starring Ossie Davis.
Longacre Theater, 220 W. 48th St.

SAIL AWAY
Noel Coward's latest with music.
Broadhurst Theater, 235 W. 44th St.

SUNDAY IN NEW YORK
Norman Krasna's new comedy, directed by Garson Kanin.
Cort Theater, 138 W. 48th St.

THE CARETAKER
Comedy-drama imported from England.
Lyceum Theater, 149 W. 45th St.

THE COMPLAISANT LOVER
Graham Greene's new play.
Barrymore Theater, 243 W. 47th St.

THE GARDEN OF SWEETS
Katina Paxinou in a new drama.
ANTA Theater, 245 W. 52nd St. (until Nov. 22)

THE GAY LIFE
Schwartz–Dietz music and a book by Fay and Michael Kanin.
Shubert Theater, 225 W. 44th St.

THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Martha Wright in the Rodgers–Hammerstein musical.
Lunt–Fontanne Theater, 205 W. 46th St.

THE UNSINKABLE MOLLY BROWN
Meredith Willson's musical stars Tammy Grimes.
Winter Garden, 1634 Broadway

WRITE ME A MURDER
Mystery play by Frederick Knott.
Belasco Theater, 111 W. 44th St.

OFF BROADWAY

ACROSS THE BOARD ON TOMORROW MORNING and TALKING TO YOU
A twin bill of works by William Saroyan.
East End Theater, 85 E. 4th St.

ALL IN LOVE
Sheridan's "The Rivals" set to music.
Martinique Theater, 32nd St. and Broadway

AMERICAN SAVOYARDS
Classic operetta under Dorothy Raedler's direction.
The Vagabond King, until Dec. 3
The Gondoliers, Dec. 7-17
The Student Prince, Dec. 21-31
Jan Hus Auditorium, 351 E. 74th St.

AND NOW . . . THE NEWS and ENIGMA
Two new plays by Aaron Fine.
Dollar Theater, 104 W. 3rd St.

CLANDESTINE ON THE MORNING LINE
Josh Greenfeld's comedy performed by an all-Negro cast.
Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South

DIFF'RENT
The revival of an early work by Eugene O'Neill.
Mermaid Theater, 420 W. 42nd St.

GHOSTS
The second in David Ross's Ibsen cycle.
Fourth St. Theater, 83 E. 4th St.

GO FIGHT CITY HALL
Second Avenue moves uptown (in Yiddish and English).
Mayfair Theater, 235 W. 46th St.

GO SHOW ME A DRAGON
West Coast beatniks under the microscope.
Midway Theater, 420 W. 42nd St.

LITTLE MARY SUNSHINE
Rick Besoyan's long-running operetta—or satire of one.
Players Theater, 115 Macdougal St.

MISALLIANCE
George Bernard Shaw's comedy revived.
Sheridan Sq. Playhouse, 99 Seventh Ave. So.

O MARRY ME!
A musical reworking of Oliver Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer."
Gate Theater, 162 Second Ave.

RED EYE OF LOVE
The daffy romance between a fickle girl and the owner of a meat department store.
Provincetown Playhouse, 133 Macdougal St.

SHADOW OF HEROES
Robert Ardrey's dramatization of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.
York Playhouse, 64th St. and First Ave.

SHARON'S GRAVE
An import from Dublin, presented by the Irish Players.
Maidman Playhouse, 416 W. 42nd St.

THE AMERICAN DREAM and THE DEATH OF BESSIE SMITH
Two playlets by Edward Albee.
Cherry Lane Theater, 38 Commerce St.

THE AUTOMOBILE GRAVEYARD
A controversial play by a Spaniard known only as Arrabal.
41st St. Theater, 125 W. 41st St.

THE BALCONY
Jean Genet's slice of brothel life.
Circle in the Square, 159 Bleecker St.

THE BLACKS
Genet's play on the race situation.
St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Second Ave.

THE BUSKERS
A new English play about traveling players.
Cricket Theater, 162 Second Ave.

THE FANTASTICKS
A musical fable of young lovers and their problem parents.
Sullivan St. Theater, 181 Sullivan St.

THE LIVING THEATER
Many Loves, In the Jungle of Cities, The Connection, The Apple (in repertory).
The Living Theater, 530 Sixth Ave.

THE POLICEMEN
From Poland, a comedy on life in an imaginary police state,
and **ANDROCLES AND THE LION**
A Shaw comedy, this one set in Rome, revived.
Phoenix East 74th St. Theater, 334 E. 74th St.

THE SAP OF LIFE
A young man leaves home for the wide, wide world (with music).
One Sheridan Square, 1 Sheridan Sq.

THE THREEPENNY OPERA
Mack the Knife, the king of off Broadway, still going strong.
Theater de Lys, 121 Christopher St.

ON THE ROAD TO BROADWAY

A FAMILY AFFAIR
Philadelphia, Erlanger Theater, Dec. 23-Jan. 13

GIANTS, SONS OF GIANTS
Wilmington, Playhouse, Dec. 21-23

SOMETHING ABOUT A SOLDIER
Wilmington, Playhouse, Nov. 29-Dec. 2
Philadelphia, Forrest Theater, Dec. 4-16
Boston, Colonial Theater, Dec. 18-30

SUBWAYS ARE FOR SLEEPING
Boston, Colonial Theater, Nov. 28-Dec. 16

THE CAPTAIN AND THE KINGS
Detroit, Shubert Theater, Nov. 27-Dec. 3
Toronto, Royal Alexandra Theater, Dec. 4-10
Philadelphia, Locust Theater, Dec. 11-25

TOURING SHOWS

ADVISE AND CONSENT
Providence, Veterans Memorial, Nov. 27
Hartford, Bushnell Memorial Hall, Nov. 28
Reading, Rajah Theater, Nov. 29
Rochester, The Auditorium, Nov. 30-Dec. 2
Boston, Wilbur Theater, Dec. 4-23
Buffalo, Kleinhans Music Hall, Dec. 29, 30

A TASTE OF HONEY
Boston, Wilbur Theater, Nov. 20-Dec. 2
New Haven, Shubert Theater, Dec. 4-9
Baltimore, Ford Theater, Dec. 11-16
Philadelphia, Forrest Theater, Dec. 25-Jan. 6

A THURBER CARNIVAL
Washington, National Theater, Nov. 20-Dec. 2
Worcester, Loew's Poli Theater, Dec. 2-4
New London, (theater to be announced) Dec. 5
Albany, Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 6
Utica, Stanley Theater, Dec. 7-9
Philadelphia, Walnut St. Theater, Dec. 11-23

BYE BYE BIRDIE
Chicago, Erlanger Theater (indefinite run)

FIORELLO!
Boston, Shubert Theater, Nov. 6-Dec. 2
Washington, National Theater, Dec. 4-Jan. 6

GYPSY
Los Angeles, Biltmore Theater (indefinite run)

LA PLUME DE MA TANTE
Columbus, Hartman Theater, Nov. 27-Dec. 2
Cincinnati, Shubert Theater, Dec. 4-9
St. Louis, American Theater, Dec. 11-23
Montreal, Her Majesty's Theater, Dec. 25-Jan. 6

MY FAIR LADY
Milwaukee, Pabst Theater, Nov. 13-Dec. 9
Pittsburgh, New Nixon Theater, Dec. 11-30

THE BEST MAN
Detroit, Fisher Theater, Nov. 27-Dec. 16
Cincinnati, Shubert Theater, Dec. 18-23
Dayton, Victory Theater, Dec. 25, 26
Louisville, (theater to be announced) Dec. 28-30

THE MIRACLE WORKER
San Francisco, Geary Theater, Nov. 14-Dec. 2
Los Angeles, Biltmore Theater, Dec. 4-23
Lubbock, Tex., The Auditorium, Dec. 25
Amarillo, Tex., Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 26
San Angelo, Tex., Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 27
Austin, Tex., Dec. 28
Dallas, Memorial Auditorium, Dec. 29, 30

THE MUSIC MAN—Forrest Tucker
Philadelphia, Shubert Theater, Nov. 27-Dec. 23
Boston, Shubert Theater, Dec. 25 (indefinite run)

THE MUSIC MAN—Harry Hickox
St. Paul, Auditorium Theater, Nov. 23-27
Sioux Falls, S.D., Civic Auditorium, Nov. 28, 29
Fargo, N.D., Civic Auditorium, Nov. 30
Sioux City, Iowa, Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 2
Omaha, Music Hall Theater, Dec. 4, 5
Lincoln, Neb., Stuart Theater, Dec. 6
Topeka, Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 7
Kansas City, Mo., Music Hall Theater, Dec. 8, 9
Hutchinson, Kan., Convention Hall, Dec. 10
Pueblo, Colo., Dec. 12
Denver, The Auditorium Theater, Dec. 13-16
Grand Junction, Colo., The High School, Dec. 18
Salt Lake City, Dec. 19-21
Idaho Falls, Ida, Municipal Auditorium, Dec. 22, 23
Yakima, Wash., State Capitol Theater, Dec. 26
Seattle, Orpheum Theater, Dec. 27-30

THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Chicago, Shubert Theater (indefinite run)

THE TENTH MAN
Toronto, Royal Alexandra Theater, Nov. 6-Dec. 2
Pittsburgh, New Nixon Theater, Dec. 4-9
Columbus, Hartman Theater, Dec. 11-13
Louisville, Memorial Auditorium, Dec. 14-16
Philadelphia, Forrest Theater, Dec. 18-23
Cleveland, Hanna Theater, Dec. 25-31

TOYS IN THE ATTIC
Pittsburgh, New Nixon Theater, Nov. 27-Dec. 2
Montreal, Her Majesty's Theater, Dec. 4-9
Toronto, Royal Alexandra Theater, Dec. 11-23
Chicago, Blackstone Theater, Dec. 25-Feb. 3

COMMUNITY, RESIDENT, AND COLLEGE THEATERS

*Indicates premiere
†Indicates run with closing date indefinite

CALIFORNIA
Alameda: Roar Like a Dove, through Dec. 9, Altarena Playhouse
Hollywood: Under the Yum-Yum Tree, through Jan. 1, Las Palmas Theater
Los Angeles: Someone Waiting, through Nov. 30, Horseshoe Stage; Lysistrata* (by John Dikeos),† Theater Event; Under the Sycamore Tree, through Dec. 2; Lady in the Dark, opens Dec. 7, Magnolia Theater
Palo Alto: Two for the Seesaw; Take Me Along; Look Homeward, Angel; Between Two Thieves (in repertory), through Dec., Comedia Repertory Theater; The King and I, Dec. 1, 2, 6-9, 13-16, Community Theater
Porterville: The Royal Family, Nov. 30-Dec. 16, Barn Theater
Sacramento: A Mighty Man Is He, through Dec 9; An Eve With Adam* (by J. E. Wyman), Dec. 15-Jan. 13, JayRob Playhouse; The Crucible, through Dec. 9, Eaglet Theater
San Diego: The Importance of Being Earnest, through Dec. 17, Old Globe Theater
San Francisco: The Maids, The Sandbox; Krapp's Last Tape, The Zoo Story; The Birthday Party (in repertory),† Encore Theater; Ruddigore, through Nov. 25, Harding Theater; King Lear; Sergeant Musgrave's Dance* (by John Arden); Becket (in repertory),† Marines Theater; Once Upon a Mattress, Sat. eves.,† Opera Ring; San Francisco's Burning* (by Helen Adam and Warner Jepson),† opens Dec. 1, Playhouse

COLORADO
Ft. Collins: The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Old Main Theater

CONNECTICUT
Bridgeport: Having a Wonderful Crime,* Dec. 8-11, Klein Memorial Theater
New Canaan: The Fireman's Flame, through Dec. 2, South School

DELAWARE
Dover: Duet for Two Hands, through Dec. 2, Wesley Coll. Theater
Newark: Abe Lincoln in Illinois, Dec. 7-9, University Theater

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Washington: The American Dream, What Shall We Tell Caroline?, Nov. 28-Dec. 25; The Madwoman of Chaillot, opens Dec. 26, Arena Stage; Snow Girl, Dec. 27, Children's Theater of Washington; Coriolanus, Dec. 1-16, Catholic Univ. Theater; Dangerous Corner, Nov.-Dec., Theater Lobby

FLORIDA
Coral Gables: The Rose Tattoo, Nov. 23-Dec. 10, Actors' Studio "M" Playhouse
Jacksonville: The Pleasure of His Company, Nov. 24-Dec. 1, Fairfax Theater; Auntie Mame, Nov. 24-Dec. 2, Jacksonville Little Theater; Death of a Salesman, Nov. 28, Dec. 1, 2; Jacksonville Univ. Players

Lake Worth: Ladies in Retirement, Dec. 7-9, Lake Worth Playhouse
Miami: Hansel and Gretel, opens Dec., Dade County Auditorium; The Cherry Orchard, Dec. 10-16, Ring Theater, Univ. of Miami
Pensacola: Ten Little Indians, Nov. 28-Dec. 2, Little Theater
Tampa: Peter Pan, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Community Theater

HAWAII
Honolulu: The Sound of Music, through Dec. 2, Ruger Theater

ILLINOIS
Chicago: The Little Hut, through Dec. 2, Chicago Stage Guild; York Cycle, Dec. 26-31, John Woolman Hall; The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial, opens Nov. 10,† Theater First; The Lark, through Dec. 20; Pinocchio* (by George Latshow), through Dec. 10 (Sat. and Sun. matinees only), Goodman Theater
Des Plaines: Mary Stuart, through Dec. 2, Theater Guild
Evergreen Park: Over Twenty-one, Nov. 28-Dec. 17, Drury Lane Theater
Lake Forest: School For Dictators,* Dec. 1-3, Lake Forest Coll. Theater
Peoria: The Skin of Our Teeth, Dec. 7-10, Bradley Univ. Theater; The Pajama Game, Dec. 1-10; Amahl and the Night Visitors, Dec. 15-17, The Peoria Players Community Theater

INDIANA
Crawfordsville: Brand, Dec. 7-9, Wabash Coll. Theater
Fort Wayne: Romanoff and Juliet, Dec. 1-16, Fort Wayne Civic Theater
Richmond: A Majority of One, Dec. 12-16, Richmond Civic Theater

IOWA
Cedar Rapids: Dial M for Murder, Dec. 1-9, Community Theater
Des Moines: The Golem* (by Sidney Lackner), Dec. 1-16, Des Moines Community Playhouse

LOUISIANA
Baton Rouge: The Dark at the Top of the Stairs, Nov. 28-Dec. 9, Baton Rouge Little Theater Playhouse
New Orleans: Children of Darkness, Dec. 6-17, Little Theater Vieux Carré

MAINE
Bangor: Look Homeward, Angel, Dec. 15, 16, Bangor Civic Theater

MARYLAND
Baltimore: The Happiest Millionaire,† Vagabond Theater

MASSACHUSETTS
Boston: The Prodigal, Dec. 7-9, Boston Univ. Theater; The Chairs, The Maids, through Dec., Charles Playhouse

MICHIGAN
Detroit: King Lear, Dec. 1-9, Wayne State Univ. Theater
East Lansing: Dr. Faustus, Nov. 29-Dec. 3, Michigan State Univ. Theater
Grand Rapids: The Innocents, Nov. 30-Dec. 9, Civic Theater

MINNESOTA
Minneapolis: A View From the Bridge, Nov. 30-Dec. 3, Theater in the Round Players
St. Paul: La Vie Parisienne, Nov. 24-Dec. 10, Theater St. Paul

MISSOURI
Cape Girardeau: The Lark, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Southeast Missouri State Coll.
Columbia: The Taming of the Shrew, Dec. 6-16, Stephens Coll. Playhouse
Springfield: The Grass Harp, Nov. 28-Dec. 2, Clara Thompson Hall

MONTANA
Bozeman: Antigone, Nov. 30, Dec. 1, Student Union Theater

NEBRASKA
Omaha: Julius Caesar, Nov. 24-Dec. 10, Omaha Playhouse

NEW JERSEY
Oradell: Send Me No Flowers, Nov. 30-Dec. 16, Little Firehouse Theater
Parsippany: Separate Tables, Nov. 29-Dec. 9, Barn Theater
Secaucus: Laura, Dec. 2-9, Community Theater

NEW YORK
Buffalo: Banners of Steel* (by Barrie Stavis), Nov. 29-Dec. 9, Studio Theater
Huntington: Life With Father, Nov. 24-Dec. 2, Half Hollow Hills Theater
Johnson City: Anything Goes, Dec. 8-10, Enjoy Theater
Nyack: The Chalk Garden, Dec. 7-17, Elmwood Community Playhouse
Rochester: Lady in the Dark, Nov. 30-Dec. 9, Rochester Community Players
Rye: The Cause of It All, The Chain* (by Alfred Levinson), Dec. 10, Chrysler Auditorium

NORTH CAROLINA
Greensboro: The Rivals, Dec. 6-8, The Theater of Woman's Coll.
Misenheimer: Twelve Angry Men, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Pfeiffer Coll. Theater

OHIO
Athens: Medieval Christmas Mystery Play, Dec. 13, Ohio Univ.
Cincinnati: The Servant of Two Masters, Nov. 29-Dec. 31, Playhouse-in-the-Park
Cleveland: Third Best Sport, Dec. 6-9, Shaker Players Theater; Lady in the Dark, through Dec. 3, Blanche R. Halle Theater; Roman Candle, Nov. 22-Dec. 17; Ernest in Love, Dec. 20-31; Cleveland Playhouse (Euclid 77 Theater); Build Me a Bridge* (by Mary Drayton), Nov. 29-Dec. 10; The Pleasure of His Company, Dec. 13-Jan. 7; Cleveland Playhouse (Drury Theater); Under the Yum-Yum Tree, Dec. 26-Jan. 28, Cleveland Playhouse (Brooks Theater)
Columbus: Major Barbara, opens Nov. 25; The Misplaced Birthday, opens Dec. 24, Gallery Players, Columbus Jewish Center; The Visit, Nov. 28-Dec. 3, Ohio State Univ. Theater
Springfield: The Chalk Garden, Dec. 8, 9; The Holy Family, Dec. 19, Wittenberg Univ. Theater
Toledo: Gigi, Dec. 7-16, Repertoire Little Theater
Youngstown: J. B., Nov. 24-Dec 10, Youngstown Playhouse

OKLAHOMA
Oklahoma City: The Little Foxes, Dec. 7-12, Oklahoma City Univ.; The Matchmaker, Dec. 4-18, Mummers Theater
Tulsa: Look Homeward, Angel, Nov. 24-Dec. 9, Tulsa Little Theater

OREGON
Ashland: The Boy Friend; Rashomon; The Miser; Night of the Auk; in repertory,† Vining Repertory Theater, Southern Oregon Coll.

PENNSYLVANIA
Allentown: The Golden Fleecing, Dec. 1-9, Civic Little Theater
Bala-Cynwyd: Our American Cousin, Dec. 1, 2, Mainline Playhouse
Harrisburg: A Majority of One, Nov. 25-Dec. 2, Harrisburg Community Theater
Meadville: Look Homeward, Angel, Dec. 7-16, Allegheny Playhouse
New Castle: Picnic, Nov. 30-Dec. 9, New Castle Playhouse
Pittsburgh: The Prisoner,† Upstairs Theater; Little Mary Sunshine, through Dec. 3, Hamlet Street Theater; Julius Caesar, Dec. 5-10, Stephen Foster Memorial Auditorium; The Son of Getron, Dec. 12-14, Heinz Memorial Chapel
Reading: Annie Get Your Gun, Dec. 1, 2, Rajah Theater
Ridley Park: The Matchmaker, Dec. 7-9, The Auditorium

SOUTH CAROLINA
Greenville: A Majority of One, opens in Dec., Greenville Little Theater

TEXAS
Dallas: Little Mary Sunshine, Nov. 22-Dec. 2, Dallas Theater Center
Houston: The Loud Red Patrick, through Dec. 9, Playhouse Theater
San Antonio: The Hasty Heart, Nov. 29-Dec. 9, San Pedro Playhouse

WASHINGTON
Seattle: Treasure Island, Dec. 2-16, Palomar Theater; The Disenchanted, Dec. 14-31, The Penthouse, Univ. of Washington

WISCONSIN
Kenosha: Inherit the Wind, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Kenosha Little Theater
Madison: Five Finger Exercise, Nov. 24-Dec. 2, Madison Theater Guild
Milwaukee: A Midsummer Night's Dream; The Seagull; The Tavern; plus two plays to be announced (in repertory) through Dec. 31, Fred Miller Theater
Racine: Call Me Madam, Dec. 5-7, Theater Guild Playhouse
Shorewood: Abie's Irish Rose, Dec. 1-3, Shorewood Players

WYOMING
Casper: The Glass Menagerie, Dec. 6-9, Paradise Valley Playhouse

CABARET THEATERS

CHICAGO
Medium Rare: Happy Medium, Rush and Delaware
Big Deal: Playwrights at Second City, 1842 N. Wells St.
Six of One: Second City, 1842 N. Wells St.

NEW YORK
Greenwich Village U.S.A.: Bon Soir, 40 W. 8th St.
Dressed to the Nines: Downstairs at the Upstairs, 37 W. 56th St.
Kangaroo Court: The Bitter End, 147 Bleecker St.
Seven Come Eleven: Upstairs at the Downstairs, 37 W. 56th St.
The Premise: The Premise, 154 Bleecker St.
The Prickly Pair: Showplace, 146 W. 4th St.
Time Gentlemen, Please!: Strollers Theater-Club, 154 E. 54th St.
Too Good for the Average Man: Camelot Supper Club, 158 E. 49th St.

DANCE

LENINGRAD KIROV BALLET
Dec. 1-4, Los Angeles
Dec. 8-17, Chicago

MAZOWSZE COMPANY OF POLAND
Dec. 1-3, New York
Dec. 5, Washington, D.C.
Dec. 6, Raleigh, N.C.
Dec. 8, Newark
Dec. 9, 10, Boston
Dec. 12, 13, Toronto
Dec. 14, 15, Montreal

BAYANIHAN PHILIPPINE DANCE COMPANY
Dec. 1, Raleigh, N.C.
Dec. 2, Charlotte
Dec. 4, Greenville, S.C.
Dec. 5, Atlanta
Dec. 6, Chattanooga
Dec. 7, Birmingham, Ala.
Dec. 8, Florence, Ala.
Dec. 10, New Orleans
Dec. 11, Lafayette
Dec. 12, Shreveport, La.
Dec. 13, Ruston, La.
Dec. 14, Port Arthur, Tex.
Dec. 15, Houston
Dec. 16, Lake Charles, La.

AMERICAN BALLET THEATER
Dec. 1, Asheville, N.C.
Dec. 2, Knoxville
Dec. 4, Columbia, S.C.
Dec. 5, Charlotte
Dec. 6, Winston-Salem, N.C.
Dec. 7, Durham
Dec. 9, Baltimore

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
New York City Center

Season: Dec. 5-Feb. 5
The Nutcracker: Dec. 26-31.

ORCHESTRAS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
Carnegie Hall
Guest Conductor: Josef Krips, Dec. 1-17

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1-3
Dec. 7-10, soloist: Tossy Spivakovsky
Dec. 14-17, narrator: Felicia Montealegre; soloists: Wilma Lipp, Shirley Verrett-Carter, Rudolf Petrak, Norman Farrow, Westminster Choir
Dec. 28, guest conductor: Werner Torkanowsky
Dec. 30, guest conductor: Werner Torkanowsky; soloist: Joseph Silverstein

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Academy of Music
Conductor: Eugene Ormandy

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1, 2, 11, soloist: Glenn Gould
Dec. 15, 16, soloist: John Browning
Dec. 29, 30

Tour:
Dec. 5, 6, Washington
Dec. 12, New York

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Orchestra Hall
Conductor: Fritz Reiner
Guest Conductor: George Szell

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1, guest conductor: Hans Rosbaud
Dec. 7, 8, soloist: Erica Morini
Dec. 9, 14, 15
Dec. 21-23, soloist: Artur Rubinstein

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Symphony Hall
Conductor: Charles Münch
Guest Conductor: Ernest Ansermet, Dec. 1-19

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1-3, 5, 7-9, 18
Dec. 29, 30, soloist: Evelyne Crochet

Tour:
Dec. 12, Hartford
Dec. 13, New York
Dec. 14, Englewood, N. J.
Dec. 15, Brooklyn
Dec. 16, New York
Dec. 19, Providence

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA
Severance Hall
Conductor: George Szell
Guest Conductor: Robert Shaw, Dec. 7-24

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1, 2, soloist: Zino Francescatti
Dec. 7-9, Singers Club
Dec. 14, 16, Cleveland Orchestra Chorus
Dec. 21, 23, soloist: Byron Janis
Dec. 24, Twilight Concert
Dec. 28, 30, soloist: Arnold Steinhardt
Dec. 31, Twilight Concert

DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Ford Auditorium
Conductor: Paul Paray

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 2, guest conductor: Istvan Kertesz
Dec. 7, 9, soloists: Jean Madeira, Albert da Costa, Norman Treigle
Dec. 14, guest conductor: Valter Poole
Dec. 21, 23, Yale Glee Club
Dec. 28, 30, soloist: Jose Iturbi

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, WASHINGTON
Constitution Hall
Conductor: Howard Mitchell

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 2, 3, soloists: Adele Addison, Donald Gramm, John McCollum, Russell Oberlin
Dec. 12, 13, soloist: Artur Rubinstein
Dec. 17, guest conductor: Lloyd Geisler
Dec. 27, 28, the Washington Ballet

PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Syria Mosque
Conductor: William Steinberg

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 3
Dec. 8, 10, soloist: Zara Nelsova
Dec. 12, guest conductor: Karl Kritz
Dec. 13, Young People's Concert
Dec. 15, soloist: Gina Bachauer
Dec. 29, 31, soloist: Phyllis Curtin

Tour:
Dec. 4, Carlisle, Pa.
Dec. 5, Harrisburg
Dec. 6, Lancaster
Dec. 9, Connellsville, Pa.
Dec. 26, Elizabeth, Pa.

MINNEAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Northrop Auditorium
Conductor: Stanislaw Skrowaczewski

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1, soloist: Yehudi Menuhin
Dec. 15, soloist: Theodore Lettvin
Dec. 29, soloist: Witold Malcuzynski

DALLAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
McFarlin Auditorium
Conductor: Georg Solti

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 2, 3
Dec. 10, 11, soloist: Leonard Pennario
Dec. 17, 18, soloist: Claudio Arrau

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
War Memorial Opera House
Conductor: Enrique Jordá

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 1, soloist: Stephen Bishop
Dec. 6-8, soloist: Robert Casadesus
Dec. 13-15, soloist: Gregor Piatigorsky
Dec. 20-22, soloist: Yehudi Menuhin

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Philharmonic Auditorium
Guest Conductor: Alfred Wallenstein

Schedule through Dec. 31:
Dec. 7, 8
Dec. 14, 15, soloist: Sanford Schonback
Dec. 21, 22, soloists: Marilyn Horne, Nan Merriman, Jan Peerce, Donald Gramm, Roger Wagner Chorale

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA
New York: Metropolitan Opera House
Season continues
Repertoire will include Wagner's Ring Cycle and La Perichole

GOLDOVSKY GRAND OPERA THEATER
Tour of Rossini's Barber of Seville
Dec. 1, Knoxville, Tenn.
Dec. 2, Radford, Va.
Dec. 4, Richmond, Va.
Dec. 5, Salisbury, Md.
Dec. 6, Cumberland, Md.
Dec. 8, Hanover, N. H.
Dec. 9, Concord, N. H.
Dec. 11, Reading, Mass.
Dec. 12, Springfield, Mass.

NEW YORK CITY OPERA
Tour itinerary through Dec. 12:
Dec. 1, Geneseo, N. Y., Madame Butterfly
Dec. 2, Ithaca, La Bohème
Dec. 4, Syracuse, La Bohème
Dec. 5, Buffalo, Cosi fan Tutte
Dec. 6, Buffalo, The Mikado
Dec. 8, Mineola, N.Y., The Marriage of Figaro
Dec. 9, Mineola, The Mikado (mat.); Madame Butterfly (eve.)
Dec. 10, Mineola, Cosi fan Tutte (mat.); La Bohème (eve.)
Dec. 11, White Plains, N. Y., The Mikado
Dec. 12, Philadelphia, H.M.S. Pinafore

RECORDS

The following is a selective list of LP's scheduled for release in December. (Unless otherwise noted, all recordings are available in both stereo and monaural.)

CLASSICAL
Beethoven: Piano Sonata: Opus 31, No. 2.
Schumann: Fantasie.
Sviatoslav Richter. (Angel)
A Beecham Anthology.
Two records. (Angel, monaural)
Foss: Time Cycle.
Adele Addison, soprano, The Improvisation Chamber Ensemble, and Leonard Bernstein conducting the Columbia Symphony Orchestra. (Columbia)
Berg: Excerpts from Wozzek and Lulu.
Soloist Helga Pilarczek and the London Symphony conducted by Antal Dorati. (Mercury)
Jerome Robbins Ballets.
Events and New York Export: Opus Jazz.
Robert Prince conducting.
(RCA Victor)

OPERA
Verdi: A Masked Ball.
Complete. With Birgit Nilsson, Carlo Bergonzi, Cornell MacNeil, Giulietta Simionato, Sylvia Stahlman. Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Georg Solti. Three records. (London)

POPULAR
Percussion Staged for Stereo. The Mallet Men. (Capitol)
Erroll Garner: Swinging Solos. (Columbia)
Bing Crosby and Guy Lombardo: Merry Christmas. (Decca)

RELIGIOUS
The Coming of Christ.
NBC's "Project 20" show adapted for records by Henry Jerome. Symphonic score by Robert Russell Bennett, narrated by Alexander Scourby. (Decca)

is the final month of the year, the time for summing up, for a statement on the meaning of what we have done in this particular year of grace. It is also the holiday season, the time of gifts and the time of joy.

The sum of the theater's aspirations, the totality of its meaning, has traditionally been expressed by the classic masks of comedy and tragedy. On the next two pages we present modern adaptations of these masks. Tragedy no longer thunders its anguish, and comedy has lost its gusto. The voice of our times is an ironic whisper, and its tragedies and amusements are smaller, more private, than they were in other ages. Hence the quality of the statement photographer Melvin Sokolsky has made for us on the next two pages.

Hence, too, the qualities you will find in our Christmas gift to you—Lawrence Durrell's new, never-before-published play, "Acte," or "The Prisoners of Time." In Durrell, the world has lately discovered a writer whose brilliantly charged language perfectly expresses the mood of ironic tragedy, whether the setting be contemporary or ancient.

But we spoke, in the beginning, of joy. And it is the miracle of this season that it still stirs in our hearts, despite the anxieties which surround our time and place. We pay tribute to it with Walt Kelly's loving commentary on Christmas carols and caroling, a very old and most treasured performing art. "Look! We Have Come Through" D. H. Lawrence wrote as another time of darkness ended. "Joy to the World!" we sing in the midst of ours. THE EDITORS

ACTE

OR
THE
PRISONERS
OF
TIME

A
NEW
PLAY
BY
LAWRENCE DURRELL

THE CHARACTERS

METELLUS, *satrap of Scythia*
GENERAL FABIUS
SECRETARY *to Metellus*
PRINCESS ACTE, *daughter of King Corvinus of Scythia*
NURSE
MYRKO, *a dwarf, jester to the court of Acte*
AMBASSADOR GALBA, *secretary-adviser to Acte*
AMAR, *a tribal chieftain of Scythia*
EIRON, *a secretary to Acte*
FLAVIA, *wife of Fabius*
PETRONIUS ARBITER, *poet and Nero's closest friend*
TESTER, *body servant to Petronius*
NERO, *the Emperor*
SPORUS, *Nero's favorite*
GHOST OF AGRIPPINA, *Nero's mother*
AGRICOLA, BALBUS, ARGO } *young Roman officers*
BARBER
SOLDIERS, ATTENDANTS, JAILERS, et cetera

The scene is Scythia, Rome, Brundisium, and a villa in Tuscany. The time is the first century A.D.

AN AUTHOR'S NOTE

If all writers were judged on their intentions, how generous a world it would seem to them—for execution nearly always falls short of specific intention by a large margin. Nevertheless, it is valuable when the chance arises to try and rationalize your objectives; it provides a yardstick.

I had visualized this play to be a story on more than one level: the story of a hostage taken into captivity from a small and troublesome border state—a sort of Ireland of the first century. I have called this faraway province Scythia. On the personal level—the level of personalities in action—it is by intention a tragic history, the portrayal of a love affair nourished as much on racial misunderstandings as on unusual sympathies. The youngish Princess Acte is one of those exotic flowers of a distant race which exercises a magnetic attraction over the stern Regular Army general whose task it is to put down the Scythian revolt and carry her into captivity. Fabius, the soldier, finds his task harder than it should be because of his sympathy for the feckless, disarming, and delightful Scythians, and because of his attraction for their Princess—an attraction which turns into a sentimental infatuation and ends by destroying his morale as a soldier and a man. The contrast between the two races could not well be sharper; I think we should imagine perhaps someone like a beautiful, temperamental Burmese Princess carried off to the court of Elizabeth by a soldier of the caliber of Sir Walter Raleigh. They fall in love; this is the first of those fatal errors which human beings commit, and upon which destiny, that nonfilterable virus, seizes. Events are put into motion whose results are not foreseeable. The present manufactures the future, and history begins.

As for Acte, politically immature, and moreover the spoiled child of an indulgent, indolent, poetry-loving court, she rapidly finds herself out of her depth in a Rome—the Rome of Nero and Petronius Arbiter—which is itself lurching to its doom. She commits one mistake after another—personal, political, military. Finally, she is left with only the absurd dream of a free Scythia to nourish her; to this, in default of love, she is forced to cling. A brilliantly thoughtless odalisque, incapable herself of a deliberate dishonesty, she nevertheless unconsciously destroys the morale of Fabius, the only *raison d'être* of the soldier who loves her. But just as her exotic *mœurs* melt and founder in the hard countinghouse atmosphere of a corrupt Rome, so in a sense do Scythia and the Scythian cause; her country is dragged into the orbit of the Empire's own decline and becomes part of it. The personal histories intersect with the political destinies of the countries involved; human values, personal values, and historic values have become entangled in each other. If this range of reference is successfully stated, then my metaphor has a contemporary meaning, for it relates us to the human situation today.

Meanwhile, at the heart of the Roman cobweb the two spider shapes are also provoking destiny: Nero and Arbiter struggle like unsuccessful artists to discover the meaning of history. Behind their intellectual maneuvers lies the question: Can history ever be harnessed and molded by the artist? Or is it always to be a succession of tragic errors which must engulf the individual and destroy him? Is there such a thing as the tragedy in the Greek sense—the irremediable fate which lies in store for man? Or is this extreme view too fatalistic? To plumb this problem, Nero devises a control experiment: our hero and heroine, blindly imagining they are exercising free will, become guinea pigs. Incapable of abandoning their heroic postures, they are swept to their doom by the forces set into motion around the gravitational field of history. Rome, herself engulfed by Time, engulfs Scythia once and for all this time.

To the degree that the characters have substance and reality as *people* will the piece convey its historic message; here everything depends on its presentation. And here a writer has to come to terms with his form. Has he successfully married these two images, the personal and the historic?

There are no final answers to any of the capital questions raised; yet I would like to believe that the ironist Petronius Arbiter manages to produce, as his veins are being opened for him, some rationale for the poets and stoics of the present time: the faintest glimmer of a smile upon the closing darkness. We need that smile very badly today.

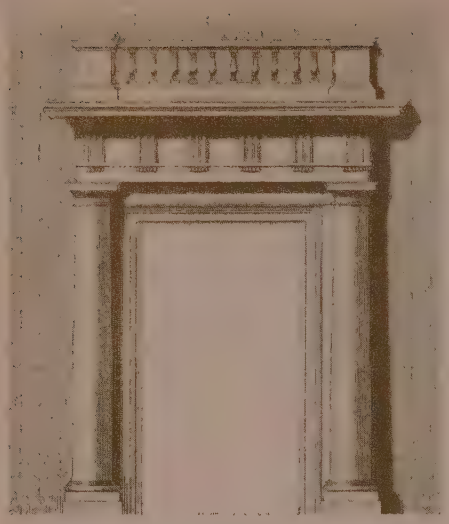
The final question, of course, is: Why poetry, in an age which is frankly indifferent to it? There are several answers to the question. In my own opinion, I would say that while prose demarcates, delimits, defines, circumscribes, poetry sets up sympathetic vibrations in the psyche. It is a nourisher and educator of the psyche, operating not by ideas (which have to be filtered through the forebrain) but by ideograms. In an age when the faculties of human attention have been so massively assailed as to turn very large sections of our populations into near morons—I mean by film, radio, television, advertising—in such a time, poets should nail their colors to the mast and turn a blind eye on the simpler and more Gadarene forms. But here let me qualify the word a bit, for the intention is not to manufacture massive bravura pieces for declamation, but to find a way of writing poetry so that it lifts the emotional charge of words by an octave or so, without imposing rhetoric upon the ear. I think it is to Eliot we owe the phrase "heightened speech"; it is something for which he hunted long and patiently, and found in his brilliant "Cocktail Party." I am conducting the same sort of hunt for myself, but starting at a slightly different angle; I would like to fuse poetry and dramatic action so thoroughly that the audience would not be conscious of poetry as a separate ingredient in my dish. Form and content would carry a sense of total inevitability, so that one would not know whether it was poetry or prose being spoken. This, I suppose, is a hopeless ideal. But it is a part of the general intention behind this melodrama and I should make a clean breast of it.

Whether from all this my portraits emerge with any clarity I cannot yet tell. Lovely, capricious, impulsive, indolent, touching, stupid, heroic—who can bring such an Acte to life? Fabius is easier: soldiers come from the mold in determined shapes, even those who love poetry. Adventurous, self-controlled, mature at the beginning, Fabius cracks as only an iron man should —down the center. His wife, the beautiful, cunning little vampire Flavia—she might be easier to manufacture, a woman destroyed, burnt out by lack of love, whose power and tenacity have been mobilized in defense of a family tradition and a son. A relentless enemy, a magnificent friend. An Army wife!

And what of the two great mentors of Rome, Nero alternating between madness and an uncomfortable sanity dictated by the phases of the moon, and Petronius Arbiter the Ironist? The Emperor is perhaps the easier of the two, bowed down as he is with the whole weight of his self-accusations and terrors, and tormented by the feeling that the world's pattern has a coherence and a meaning, if only it could be grasped. Petronius is the more enigmatic of the two; and it is right that he should be so. I wonder how near I have got to the author of the "Satyricon" and of those tantalizing fragments which have been gathered up from his verses. ("Death draws the unhappy together; bereaved parents utter their groans with one voice, and the moment makes them equal. We too will strike the stars with words in unison; the saying is that prayers travel more strongly when united.")

There is more than one kind of hero. LAWRENCE DURRELL

Left: Durrell at home in the south of France. Photographed by Elliott Erwitt



ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

Two men are playing a game with short javelins and target in the comfortable villa of METELLUS, *the satrap of Scythia. They are* METELLUS *himself, elderly, lean, money-grubbing, but agile; and the Roman general* FABIUS, *a handsome and self-controlled soldier in his early forties. A* SLAVE *attends a table with food and drink on it; they drink as they play, firing at the large target (as in archery) which stands in a corner of the room.*

A SECOND SLAVE *acts as marker, picking out the javelins. Upstage sits a* SECRETARY, *writing at a table. The two men, who have an undisguised contempt for one another, are talking policy as they play and drink.*

METELLUS: Moderation! Whenever did moderation pay?
Answer me that! And with savages like these?
No, Rome is getting feeble and irresolute,
Old in the tooth and mind—like our generals, General!

FABIUS: So!

METELLUS: Our powers wane, the ants are in the wood.
We look everywhere for direction, resolution.
There is none. Timid and indolent Romans
Have replaced the ones we knew before.
An empire governed by grandmothers, General.
And now with Nero mad . . . or so they say . . .

FABIUS: I can see we shall never agree, Metellus.
A seven! You take the point.

METELLUS: For twenty years I've been a satrap here,
In one forgotten province or another.
I know my Scythians! They need a good lesson.
For a revolt like this I would have burned
Twenty villages, impaled a thousand youths and girls,
Doubled the tax on grain, trebled it,
And burnt the harvest under their noses.

FABIUS: The tax was too high already; in fact, it partly caused
The revolt we speak of; a little moderation—

METELLUS: I had my plans, but in you come, bursting with Roman ideals

FABIUS: —and countermand your orders. I know. I am sorry.
A soldier sees things differently.

METELLUS: It is not fair; moreover, it is not good sense.
They should be taught a real lesson this time.

(He snaps his fingers.)

FABIUS: I wanted to speak about that; they have had a lesson,
A brutal one in terms of war. It should be enough.

METELLUS: Enough? My good soldier, I have only just begun.
It is not enough to smash their army and leave the court
Free to resume its own conspiracies. I was going to kill
The father and the daughter both together.

FABIUS: We must reconsider all this.

METELLUS: What is there to reconsider? They only understand one thing
In Scythia: that is torture. You must go about it
Bit by bit, slowly, with science, not all at once.
They are an old-fashioned people, General,
With a sense of style. "Nothing in haste" is their motto.
Slowly, certainly, continuously, until they understand,
And at that point they break . . . thus!
We must put out the daughter's eyes first—

FABIUS: The eyes of the Princess Acte? You are mad, Metellus.
Politically, it would be madness; those famous eyes!
Think of all the songs about them. They are a symbol.

METELLUS: Exactly. That is the point.

FABIUS: The whole of Scythia would flame with anger.
You would unite them all again if you did.

METELLUS: Because you speak their language, General,
You believe you know them; you are sentimental about them
That is where we differ.

FABIUS: Perhaps. At any rate, the revolt is quelled now,
Their armies smashed and scattered. You are safe.
I shall take the ringleader back to Rome with me.

METELLUS: Who, the Princess? Boh!

FABIUS: As a hostage, of course. I have written the dispatch.

METELLUS: And old King Corvinus, the father?

FABIUS: As I see it, he were better left. The people need him.
He is popular and much loved and . . . ineffectual.
A good weapon for your policies, Metellus.

METELLUS: Policies! This is no sovereign state.
It is a colony, General, a colony.

FABIUS: Try not to let them feel it is; be a wise man, Satrap,
And rule it gently, moderately, justly.
Less cruelty and less extortion—you must excuse me—
And your Scythia will remain at peace then.

METELLUS: Ah, this Roman idealism! So Corvinus will remain King?

FABIUS: Yes. I think one royal hostage should suffice us.

METELLUS: And what of Amar in the mountains?

FABIUS: I would have liked to take him too; but I haven't the men
To track him down. I've strengthened the frontier posts.
I think the northern tribes will stay at peace.

METELLUS: You think! You think, General! Amar is dangerous,
Like a wild boar. He is everywhere.

FABIUS: Have you ever seen him?

METELLUS: Of course not, but they say so.

FABIUS: I have heard other things about him; he is cunning,
But not very clever. Well, a Scythian, in fact.

METELLUS: But Amar was to have married the Princess Acte—
You know that? You heard that?

FABIUS: He will have to come to Rome to fetch her.

I am leaving tonight with an escort of horse.
I'll take her with me. Countermand your orders
For her torture and death. She is Rome's prisoner.

METELLUS: Let us discuss the matter first.

FABIUS: No. This is an order. In the name of the Emperor, obey.

METELLUS: Do you think your plan will work, General?
Amar must know your movements.

FABIUS: Of course he does. I sent a messenger to tell him.

METELLUS: You are mad. He will ambush you.

FABIUS: I was hoping he would try; if we could lure him
Down into the plains, we might kill or capture him.

METELLUS: The workings of the military mind! My brain reels.
You must like danger very much to make such plans.

FABIUS: Another seven! My trick, Metellus.

METELLUS: And if this revolt breaks out again?

FABIUS: It won't, I promise you.

METELLUS: In you'll come again, with one insufficient legion
At your heels, chattering of moderation, conciliation—

FABIUS: You'll be spared that too. Someone else will come
To do the chattering, as you call it. I have been
Ordered north to Gaul. You won't see me again.
Match, Satrap. Trick and match! I win.

METELLUS: Curse my luck! That makes four—no, five dinars.
Take it, soldier, take it. When do you set out?

FABIUS: Tonight. The sooner Acte leaves, the better.

METELLUS: You'll have to watch her, you know. She's up to every trick.

FABIUS: Of course.

METELLUS: Poisoned wine cups, concealed daggers.

FABIUS: I don't take chances, Metellus. You know that.

METELLUS: They say she has never had a man! Aha!
Can you believe that of a Scythian? I cannot.
Well, it might explain her follies and caprices.
I've seen her shake her slaves like rag dolls.
And then to be married to that stinking boor of an Amar!
Pew, what a fate! To live on pig's flesh and garlic!
Well, who else will go?

FABIUS: The fewer the better. She can have two attendants.
I'll take the old man Galba; he knows our ways
and our language. He is literate.

METELLUS: I have ordered his execution. He's too intelligent.

FABIUS: It is perhaps a quality we shall need. Set him free.
I will send you the full list before I leave.
Meanwhile, do as I say. They are my prisoners now.
So, Metellus, good-bye and good government!

METELLUS: I wish I could echo you, General.

FABIUS: Your hand.

*(*METELLUS *makes no effort to take the proffered hand.* FABIUS *shrugs his shoulders and exits.* METELLUS *sinks his chin on his fist and broods. The* SECRETARY *comes to his side and puts a paper on the table.)*

SECRETARY: I have drafted the orders, sir.

*(*METELLUS *drums on the paper with his fingers and springs up; he takes a turn up and down, grinding fist in palm.)*

METELLUS: I will not be made a laughingstock in Scythia;
I will not have these arrogant soldiers interfering
In my territory. Who does Fabius think he is?
Let the orders stand! I have decreed their deaths.
It is done. I will not change it now.

SECRETARY: Shall I tear up the new order?

METELLUS: Wait.

SECRETARY: It would be unwise to disobey, sir. The Emperor Nero—

METELLUS: Shut up, you fool. I'm thinking.

SECRETARY: Yes, sir.

METELLUS: Well, if I cannot actually cross Fabius,
No one could blame me for an administrative slip—
An order misunderstood, could they?

SECRETARY: I do not follow.

METELLUS: Tear this up. Send a verbal message to the prison
That all the executions are suspended. No, write it,
Write it, so we have it to show in case of need.
But tell the guard to go ahead and blind the Princess,
Before they hand her over to the army; verbally, I mean.

SECRETARY: I understand.

METELLUS: That at least we shall accomplish.

SECRETARY: But if the general should have Nero's ear at court—

METELLUS: Fabius does not know I have a cousin at court myself.
I think we could tell him the General has been overheard
Speaking lightly of his Emperor . . . could we not?
Yes. Something along those lines in my next dispatch.
Go. Do as I say.

(Exit SECRETARY. METELLUS *stands thoughtfully, rattling the javelins. Then he throws one at the target with an air of triumph.)*

SCENE TWO

In the prison of Metellus. ACTE *is leaning against the wall in a dispirited attitude, talking.* GALBA, *an elderly and refined-looking councilor, is seated on a stool in the corner. Seated in the center of the stage is a dwarf in motley playing abstractedly with a rubber bladder. He is* MYRKO, *the court jester. He has bells on his cap and parti-colored costume which make a jingle when he moves. Acte's old* NURSE *sits in a corner, eating a crust.* ACTE *speaks with authority but impulsively, which suggests that she is both hot-headed and capricious as well as brave.*

ACTE: Exile, dishonor, slavery, defeat—Go on, make a list of them.
The ruin of Scythia and my father's house . . .
And you sit there and say that fate is merciful;
You sit there like an old maid counting your blessings!
O Galba, what do we matter when poor Scythia lies
Defeated, under the Roman heel, perhaps forever?

GALBA: I was only talking.

ACTE: You were only talking! That's what diplomats are for!
O when will my father come? Father! Father!
I am so impatient I could choke with rage.

(She walks up and down, making gestures of impatience.)

GALBA: You may not be allowed to see him before we leave.

ACTE: That would be like them, the Roman swine!

(She crosses to stare down at the DWARF.)

And look at Myrko, poor Myrko! In all this turmoil
He has lost his reason. Haven't you, boy?
When jesters go mad, the world is truly at a low ebb.
What shall we do for laughter now? Yet he's lucky.
Myrko is luckier than perhaps he knows.

(She seats herself.)

Come to me, boy. Come to me then. Have you forgotten Acte?

(The jester behaves like a frightened dog, gazing at her. Finally, he creeps to her and cuddles close against her. She strokes him.)

He is trembling like a spaniel. There, poor Myrko, there!
They will not harm you. Come close, that's right.
How much laughter you gave us once—is it all
Dried up and spent, then? Look at me, look at your mistress.

(She tries to raise his head, but he looks down like a shy child.)

Don't be afraid of me, Myrko. Here.

(She tries to feed him with a crust, but he refuses and crawls away into a dark corner.)

Shall he come with us, Galba?

GALBA: Apparently; at any rate, he is here.
But he would be an encumbrance. You should have
Had him put away long ago.

ACTE: How can you say it? I had Myrko when I was a child.

GALBA: I am sorry. They should be coming soon to hand us over.
Metellus must be raging! I can see his face.
After planning to impale us all, and as for you . . .

ACTE: I know. Don't go on about it. My famous eyes.

GALBA: Truly, the Gods have been merciful to us.

ACTE: It would have been strange to feel the darkness

All around, all over me, covering my whole body
Like a second skin. It would have changed nothing.

GALBA: Hush, my dear, I cannot bear it, to think of it.
But now, at least, it is all over with Scythia.

ACTE: How dare you say such a thing, how dare you say it?
We must begin all over again, that is all.
We will not desist; we will regain our freedom.

GALBA: O Acte! Acte!

ACTE: You must not poison us with false council.
I order you, Galba. Even from Rome much can be done.
Much must be done. I will not have you whining.

GALBA: You are so willful and so headstrong, the whole family.
What has it brought us? Look at the results:
Three revolts in ten years—all complete failures!
Famine and murder and starvation, and taxes—
Greater and greater taxes and punishments.
And in the last one your lovely sister Metanira died . . .

ACTE: I know.

(She hangs her head.)

GALBA: And you so nearly died this time, and with your father.
O Acte, be advised, my dear; we are attempting the impossible.
Aie! And you haven't learned your lesson yet.
There is a difference between heroism and lunacy!
You are headstrong, you are willful. Let your old father
Die in peace, at least; he has not long, you know.

ACTE: Do you remember the oaths we swore, all of us,
On my sister's tomb? Do you remember?

GALBA: Yes.

ACTE: They are still binding; we can't forswear them,
As long as we are Scythians. Never.

GALBA: Why not think in terms of a treaty with Rome?
A just treaty, an equitable treaty?

ACTE: To treat with our oppressors? You are mad.

GALBA: No. I am tired. I see no future for us
Unless we radically alter our way of thinking.

ACTE: Your long residence in Rome has corrupted you.

GALBA: No.

ACTE: Yes it has. You have begun to think like them.

GALBA: The world is a big place, Acte. Scythia is small,
And you have never left it. There are great forces outside
Which direct our lives. I have studied them.

ACTE: I will not listen to you; you have lost pride and good sense together.

GALBA: Pride!

ACTE: Yes, Scythian pride!

GALBA: Very well, I have lost pride! But Acte, I cannot bear
To see you advised by blockheads. It wounds me.

ACTE: Be wounded, then. I will never give in, nor will Amar.
You will see. Next time we will succeed.

GALBA: You will succeed!

ACTE: Very well, then. If you are right and everything is over,
Why should I wait for others to do the work?

GALBA: What do you mean?

ACTE: Why should I not free you all from the burden
Of my wrongheadedness? It would be quite simple.
Here, I smuggled this in with the help of Myrko.

(She takes a short dagger and points it at her throat. GALBA *springs up in alarm.)*

You know me well enough, Galba, to know that I fear nothing.
Shall I set you free? I shall count up to six.

GALBA: Ah, no, Acte. Desist. No, no.

ACTE: Well, then, you will swear the oath again, Galba.
Swear it with me, if you wish me to live.

GALBA: Put it aside. Put it aside.

ACTE: You will swear?

GALBA: Of course, dear Princess.

ACTE: Come here, then.

(GALBA *approaches; she licks her thumb and holds it out to him. He kneels and licks his thumb, placing it on hers.)*

Now. We swear upon the name and body of Metanira . . .

GALBA: We swear upon the name and body of Metanira . . .

ACTE: And on all the ancient houses of our beloved country . . .

GALBA: And on all the ancient houses of our beloved country . . .

ACTE: Never to desist from struggle . . .

GALBA: Never to desist from struggle . . .

ACTE: Until Scythia is free.

GALBA: Until Scythia is free.

ACTE: There! I knew you could not fail me.

(They embrace.)

O don't you understand? We must work, we must plan.
I have been thinking furiously of Rome, furiously,
Furiously; listen, I have sent a message to Amar.
There will be work for us to do; he will stay here—
What is that?

GALBA: The guard is coming.

(Enter THREE JAILERS *with torches. Two of them are masked. The first, unmasked, speaks.)*

FIRST JAILER: The Roman Guard is here, my orders are to hand you over.

GALBA: We shall need clothes for the journey.

FIRST JAILER: The army will arrange for everything needful.
You will follow me.

(The NURSE *gathers the* DWARF. *All step forward.* FIRST JAILER *points to* ACTE.)

Not you, as yet, Princess.

ACTE: How is this?

GALBA: Does the Princess not come with us?

FIRST JAILER: Yes, but a little later.

GALBA: But I shall wait for her.

FIRST JAILER: You will do as you are told. Follow me.

ACTE: Obey. We shall meet soon.

(Exeunt NURSE, GALBA, DWARF, *and* FIRST JAILER.)

Well, what do you want of me?

(The two masked JAILERS *stare at her without moving. They advance a step. Suddenly she is afraid, and falls back a step.)*

Has there been some change in the orders? We were told—

SECOND JAILER: No change, madam. Set your mind at rest.

THIRD JAILER: No change at all.

(They advance, lay hold of her, and begin to bind her to a chair.)

ACTE: What does this mean? You are hurting me.

SECOND JAILER: In a moment, you will be free. Do not struggle.

THIRD JAILER: Do not struggle.

FIRST JAILER: It serves no purpose, madam. In a moment, you will be free.
It will not hurt unless you struggle. I speak in all respect,
Madam, in all respect.

ACTE: So it is to be torture after all! Well, I am ready.

FIRST JAILER: Not at all. Not at all. Quite painless. Upon my honor, Princess

SECOND JAILER: The beauty of the eyes will rest quite unimpaired.

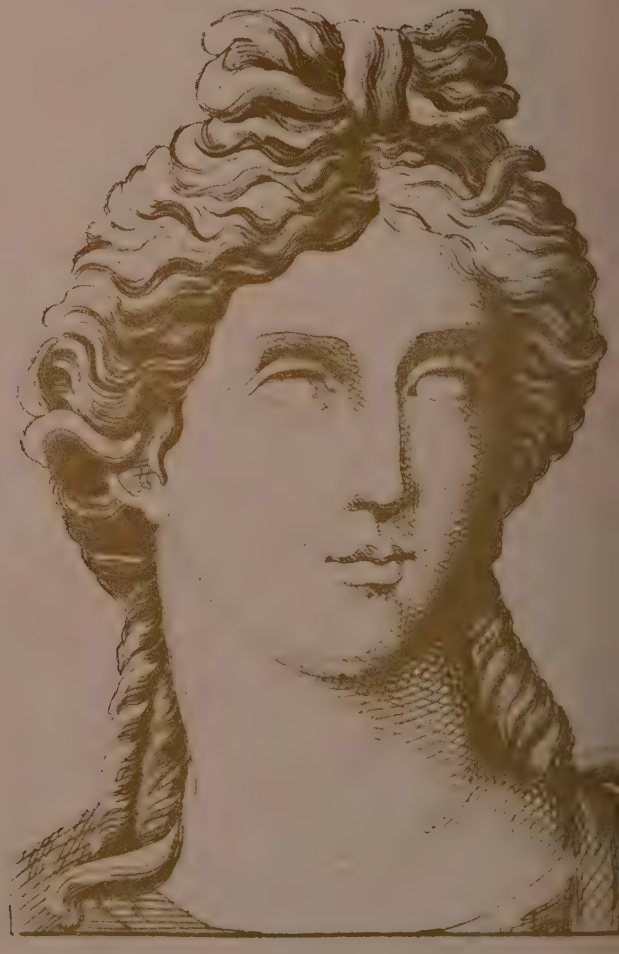
ACTE: The eyes! No, this is all a mistake.

FIRST JAILER: Yes, it is all a mistake, madam, a mistake pure and simple. It is all a mistake.

ACTE: Metellus would not dare.

FIRST JAILER: Please be silent and still; it will not hurt.
I promise it will not hurt.

(The scene slowly fades.)



SCENE THREE

A wood in Scythia. Shadows of trees against a moonlit sky; the dim shapes of tents with lights glimmering in them. A sentry with a bow crosses and recrosses in silhouette. A log fire smolders in the center of the stage. TWO ROMAN OFFICERS *warm their hands at it, one of them* FABIUS.

OFFICER: It may have been simply a blunder, sir.
FABIUS: That would be too charitable; Metellus does not blunder.
It was a deliberate slight, and I shall say so;
A slight to the Army by a civil satrap. Nero will not like it.
OFFICER: He's got plenty else to think about.
FABIUS: It's a sorry business.
OFFICER: What's done's done; she's lucky, in my opinion,
To get off with her skin.
FABIUS: Perhaps. Have they all eaten, the prisoners?
It has been a long day.
OFFICER: The Princess looked pale and tired, but she ate a little.
I've put guards on all the tents.
FABIUS: Good.
OFFICER: Well, I'd better be off and see the pickets dug in.
On the eastern side of the river?
FABIUS: The eastern, yes.
OFFICER: Stand to at dawn for all arms?
FABIUS: Yes, as usual.

*(*OFFICER *exits left.* FABIUS *puts hands behind his back and walks slowly off, brooding. Enter* ACTE, *led by* DWARF. *The* NURSE *follows with a shawl.)*

NURSE: But it's cold, child. Listen to the wind in the pines!
Put it round your shoulders. So!
ACTE: It is not so cold—is it, Myrko? Where are you?
Give me your hand. I love the smells of pine and sage.
NURSE: I shall be glad when we reach the sea.
ACTE: I can almost smell it from here, the sea.
Oh, it's a fire.
NURSE: Not too near. On that log, Myrko. That's right.
ACTE: There! Autumn in Scythia.

*(*ACTE *sighs. The* SENTRY *crosses. Voices off cry "Halt" and "Who goes there?", "Watch returning" and "Advance." The clank of weapons)*

NURSE: Ah! Soldiers! Always soldiers!
ACTE: Yes, always.
NURSE: Dearest, we should go to bed.
ACTE: I wonder why this man is avoiding the towns?
These roads were never safe for small parties,
Even in peacetime. The woods are full of leopards.
But I suppose he must know that. Yet it is odd.
Ah! I heard you yawn then; yes, I did! You are sleepy
And I'm keeping you up. Go and rest, my dear.
NURSE: If you'll come too.
ACTE: No. I want a few moments to rest and think.
But you go to bed. It's an order. Myrko will stay with me.
NURSE: Well, then. But don't be long.
ACTE: I promise.

(Exit NURSE. ACTE *unties the bandage covering her eyes, palms them for a moment, and then passes her hand before them, trying to see. The fire burns up suddenly and* FABIUS *enters.)*

FABIUS: Stand back, stand back.
ACTE: What is it?
FABIUS: You are too near the fire, Princess.
You might set your cloak alight. Here. Pray let me.
ACTE: Who are you?
FABIUS: The general Fabius, at your service.
ACTE: At my service! A pleasant mockery!
You Romans can turn fine phrases when you need.
FABIUS: I meant it as a politeness. You are in my charge.
ACTE: It had an odd ring.
General, what are we doing in such a place, so far
From the main roads? Why are we avoiding the towns?
FABIUS: I have my reasons, madam.
ACTE: There are leopards in these hills, you know, and lions.
FABIUS: I have my bowmen posted round the camp.
Do not be afraid. There is no reason.
ACTE: Afraid? In my own country? Of course I'm not.
Experience has taught me caution, that is all.
FABIUS: That log looks most uncomfortable. This one is better.
Give me your hand—may I lead you to it? As they say
In your tongue, *Gul bak che sororine?* I hope that is right?
ACTE: I was told you spoke our language; how is that?
FABIUS: Once I did; but I have got out of practice.
ACTE: You pronounce it well. Where did you learn it?

FABIUS: In your own Capitol. From the palace tutors, in fact.
ACTE: But when could all this have been?
FABIUS: I was seventeen, I suppose, and you about twelve. . . .
My uncle was your satrap then, the one you still call
The Wise One; I spent three years as his ward in high Scythia.
Golden years for a boy they were; Scythia was happy then;
Everyone was content and at peace, taxes were low—
ACTE: Did I ever see you?
FABIUS: No. But I saw you often,
Riding out on a white mare, falcon on wrist,
With a gold tunic with bells, and a red veil.
ACTE: Yes. That is right. How strange.
FABIUS: Your horse was called "Firefly," I remember.
Your sister Metanira rode beside you.
ACTE: Did she seem beautiful to a Roman?
FABIUS: Very. But proud and scornful and pale.
ACTE: Both her gifts and her beauty were greater than mine,
My father always said so; even her eyes, it seems. . . .

(There is a silence.)

FABIUS: Princess Acte, I am so sorry.
ACTE: Sorry for what?
FABIUS: This scurvy trick of Metellus—your eyes.
I reproach myself bitterly.
ACTE: Was it your fault?
FABIUS: If only I had come in sooner, I might have saved many things,
Your eyes among them. If only I had come sooner.
ACTE: These are strange words for a Roman.
FABIUS: They are sad words for a soldier, for I was ordered to hurry.
My judgment was at fault. I thought I could take my time.
I did not know how far the revolt had gone. I should have known,
But my intelligence was faulty. I waited for a new regiment.
ACTE: Well, the battle was won, was it not?
FABIUS: It might not have been necessary at all if only
I had come earlier by the short road. There could have been
A treaty signed, a compromise agreed on.
ACTE: No. You are wrong.
FABIUS: But once the revolt broke out . . . it was all over.
Yet even so, I find myself at fault as a soldier.
I thought there would be time to ride again
In the western mountains like a boy of seventeen,
Sleeping in the woods, living on a bowman's fare.
Suddenly a wild desire came over me to cross
The great ranges to where . . . can you guess?
The great Obelisk of Semiramis the Queen still stands;
Your great ancestor. Yes, and I did, I did.
I arrived by moonlight after half a lifetime
To reread her great epitaph by the moon's glow.
ACTE: She wrote it herself.

FABIUS: I know. How splendid to lie under such an epitaph.
ACTE: *(Quoting)*
"Once I ruled over the Empire of Ninus
From the black Indus river to the southernmost
Lands of myrrh and spices. Before me
No Scythian had seen a sea. I have seen four
Which none approached. . . ."
FABIUS: Yes, and then . . . like music

(They recite in unison, fired by the poetry.)

ACTE and FABIUS: "Rivers I have compelled to run where I wished.
I quickened deserts and made them bear fruit.
I raised impregnable fortresses upon new roads
Where my chariots scattered the wild lions,
Yet in the midst of all these occupations
I found time for pleasure, I found time for love."

(ACTE, to hide her emotion, turns away with a contemptuous laugh.)

ACTE: A Roman soldier who loves Scythia!
Never let it be said!
FABIUS: Yes.
ACTE: Who reads the whole history of my race
By moonlight but does not wish to set us free!
FABIUS: "Freedom is earned! Freedom is learned."
You know the proverb better than I.
All that a man could do I have done.
I was sent to pillage your cities, enslave,
Torture, and rape. I have done none of these things.
Indeed, here I am, slinking away from Scythia
In the night like a defeated general.
ACTE: Now at last I see the Roman in you.
You feared my people would rise if they saw me.
FABIUS: I feared they would weep! Forgive me
If I say you are being very foolish, very Scythian.
Freedom! You expect dreams to come true
As children do, without effort, simply because you wish it so.
Look at this futile revolt!
ACTE: Futile revolt! Ah no!
FABIUS: Five years it took to organize, or thereabouts.
In half an hour I routed you completely.
Half an hour, Princess, and everything lost!
ACTE: We will learn. You will see. We will learn.
FABIUS: And then: the last revolt which cost your sister's life!
You cannot face the Roman heavies with such stuff.
You need pikemen, you need heavy Bactrian horses,
Longer swords, fewer dreamers.
ACTE: Dreamers! Yes, we are dreamers, above all.
FABIUS: We are only soldiers.
ACTE: You are vampires. You want the silver mines,
The corn, the grain of Scythia, the slaves.
FABIUS: And you want the roads we give you,
Roads you are too lazy to build yourselves.
You accept the Roman gifts with good grace,
But will not make an effort to understand us.
ACTE: Understand what? The "Roman" Metellus.
Do you know where the grain tribute goes?
Too lazy! The thrift of Scythia goes into
The pockets of satraps ruling in Rome's name.
FABIUS: They are not all like Metellus; you know that,
ACTE: Then send us one, and we shall judge for ourselves.
FABIUS: Alas for the Wise One, my uncle!
ACTE: Yes, he was different. But times change.
We did not bother about our freedom then.
Today such a man would be considered
Almost a traitor to Rome. But Scythia
Was young then and held Rome in great respect.
FABIUS: And now Rome can no longer explain to you
And poor soldiers like myself, tied to duty—
ACTE: What is this word they all repeat?
FABIUS: There is no word in Scythian for "duty."
You have to use another—*"Menscher"*—
Family obligation. It is not the same.
ACTE: Another sad lack among us Scythians.
FABIUS: I have hurt you without meaning to.
How queerly things turn out, years afterward,
In other circumstances, in other places,
So differently from what one would have imagined.
When I was seventeen, I was in love with you.
I was too shy to go to brothels. Your image bound me.
I slept with a cold sword in my bed always
But I imagined it was you: the cold steel I warmed
With my desire for you, sharp as the blade.

(He gets up and walks about.)

It will seem unimaginably foolish to you.
But boys are foolish. I was reading your Scythian poetry,
The poetry of love. "Eternity moves its little finger,"
Wrote one, "and we fall in love." It was like that.
Then my uncle told me once: "Hurry, Fabius,
Become famous and return to me.
And if I'm still alive I'll beg the Princess Acte for you.
She would make a wife." I nearly died of shame
To think he guessed and might tell you of it.

ACTE: Please.
FABIUS: And so the dream faded, lost itself
In other places and actions. It was only
When I heard of your betrothal to Amar—
ACTE: Enough now.
FABIUS: I thought of some great coarse tribesman
With his lousy hair: I thought of you.
The image came back to me refreshed
And I had a sudden pang to hear your name.
ACTE: You have no right.
FABIUS: And I wondered whether you could love him
Or whether Scythian freedom had turned your wits.
Could you love Amar? Could you take a tribesman?
Or did politics decide your choice?
ACTE: Amar is a patriot, a giant of freedom.
And I tell you if he catches you
On this road, he will not hesitate.
He will know his "duty," as you call it.
FABIUS: I only asked.
ACTE: You are taking advantage of me.
FABIUS: No.
ACTE: Yes. Because I am blind. If I had eyes,
You know I'd drive a sword into your throat
To give you the answer that you seek.
FABIUS: Is it not possible to talk to you?
ACTE: No.
FABIUS: Anyway, now it is all past. I go to Gaul.
You go to Rome. You may recover your eyes there.
No, I am serious. We have splendid surgeons;
There may be a chance. But we must hurry.
ACTE: Do you think I am taken in for a moment
By these Roman lies? I will not owe you anything.
I promise you that if—

(There is a sudden snarling offstage—confused shouting and the whinny of horses. They listen. FABIUS *draws his sword and presses it into her hand. Exit* MYRKO, *the dwarf.)*

FABIUS: Take this a moment. I'll just go and
See. I won't be long.

(Exit FABIUS. *The noise dies down.* ACTE *walks about swinging the sword and musing aloud.)*

ACTE: Longer swords, Bactrian horses . . . of course.
Dreamers! We will see who can dream,
Who can dream best and longest,
And make dreams absolute in action.

(Suddenly she stiffens and turns. An idea has struck her. She cuts at an imaginary figure before her once, twice. Then she puts the sword behind her back and waits with pursed lips. Enter FABIUS.*)*

FABIUS: It is all right. A bowman saw a leopard
Near the horses; they were frightened.
Everyone is alert for a night ambush.
ACTE: Amar?
FABIUS: Who knows? Princess, some sleep for you,
I think, if you will take advice.
Tomorrow's march will be long and stony.
We start at daybreak. What do you say?
May I assist you to your tent?
ACTE: You are very kind, sir.
Come closer to me. I have something
I wish to ask you. Are we alone?
FABIUS: Yes.
ACTE: Good.

(Her muscles are stiff. It is clear that she is about to strike at him. But he has noticed her intention. He sighs and shakes his head, half amused. He advances toward her, but

from the side, leaving her facing wrongly for the blow.)

FABIUS: Why have they christened you "The Scythian Virgin"?

(She drops the sword.)

Is it a mockery that Scythians should seem chaste?
Is it a Scythian or a Roman joke? Which, Princess?

(He picks up the sword.)

Can it be true you never had a lover?
That would be too much to believe.

(She lowers her head, bites her lips with rage.)

ACTE: All that I know of men you have confirmed.
FABIUS: What do you know?
ACTE: That they are cruel and bound to appetites
They cannot master; a venomous tribe.
My sister's husband raped me once.
It was not pretty. I found such pleasures
Easy to renounce, if pleasures they were.
I tell you this, Fabius, as a warning—
FABIUS: A warning?
ACTE: You above all need to be warned by me
That Roman blandishments, however clever,
However sweet or subtle, will not turn my mind.
I am Scythia; not a woman, not a hostage,
Not a Princess, but an ideal made of flesh.
Beware of me—that is what I tell you.
FABIUS: Ah, wait! I did not mean it.
Here, let me help you to your feet.
At least, let me help you, Acte.

ACTE: *(Hoarsely)*

Take away those butcher's hands.
I know my way. Leave me alone.

(Exit. She moves slowly offstage. FABIUS *stands still, thinking, then sheathes his sword. Enter a* SOLDIER. *He speaks in a low voice.)*

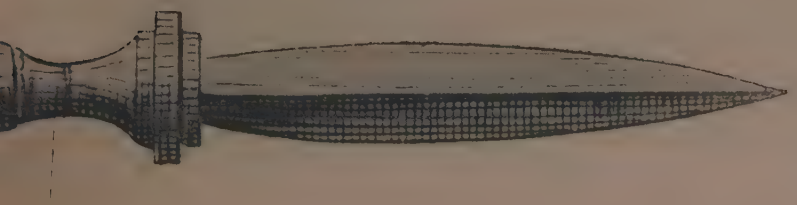
SOLDIER: General.
FABIUS: What is it, guard commander?
You may advance. I am alone.
SOLDIER: I think we should turn out the patrol
And search the campsite carefully.
Twice in the last hour someone saw a figure
Moving among the trees. The moon has gone.
It would be a wise precaution. May I?
FABIUS: What sort of figure?
SOLDIER: I can't say, sir. Just a shadow.
FABIUS: There's been no movement in the valley?
SOLDIER: None, sir.
FABIUS: The trackers found no marks, did they?
SOLDIER: Not a sign of movement anywhere.
FABIUS: Well, if you wish. But tell the
Sentinels to be silent. I don't want
Anyone awoken or alarmed.
The tents are well guarded, are they not?
SOLDIER: Yes, sir, double watch.
FABIUS: Very well, turn out your guard.
But quietly, mind.
SOLDIER: Thank you sir.

(Exit SOLDIER. FABIUS *sits down by the fire and warms his hands. The stage fills with searching* SOLDIERS *with drawn swords. They move silently in a sort of ballet, hunting. As they disperse and vanish, a* VOICE *speaks from the shadow of a tree.)*

VOICE: Fabius, is that you? The general?

*(*FABIUS *draws his sword, stands up.)*

You will not need the sword. Truly!
I want to talk to you, only to talk!
I am not armed. I have come to parley.
FABIUS: Come into the light.
VOICE: Put up your sword, Fabius.
FABIUS: If you do not obey, I will call the guard.
VOICE: Very well. Here I am, Fabius!
You will know me, though we have not met!



(Enter AMAR, *a tall tribesman dressed in skins, with a huge mop of hair. He holds his palms forward to show he is unarmed. He speaks in a lazy, wheedling voice, full of charm.)*

Were you not waiting for me? I am Amar!
FABIUS: Come closer.
AMAR: You do not believe me. I got your message.
FABIUS: If you are Amar, let me see the ring
You wear—the chieftain's ring at your ear.

*(*AMAR *shows him his ear.)*

AMAR: There! Now do you know me?
Ah, you should, you should know me.
Are we not cousins of blood!
FABIUS: Cousins!
AMAR: I have never told anyone about it, of course.
It might make my tribe suspicious of me.
But it is so. Blood cousins, Roman!
You still wear the ring with the Gorgon's head?
Yes, I see it. The ring Basil gave you.
FABIUS: But Basil is dead these many years.
AMAR: True enough. True enough. Basil is dead,
But he married my youngest sister—
His blood was mingled with mine
As your blood was mingled with his.
Don't look so amazed, cousin! It surprises you!

(He laughs extravagantly.)

FABIUS: You are dreaming. Or else prevaricating.
AMAR: Not at all. When Basil saved your life
When you were young, you swore blood brothership. Right?
FABIUS: Yes. That is true. We did.
AMAR: You still wear his ring! If you had repudiated Basil
You would not have it still, would you?
All this he told me, and many other things.
We are of one blood, Fabius, by his marriage.
You do not like the idea? I thought it would make you happy.
Loving Scythia as they say you do.
FABIUS: I have not heard of it before.
AMAR: Well, here is proof. You exchanged rings with him,
And after his death, his ring came to my sister.
Here it is. I borrowed it to show you. The same!

FABIUS: Yes. It is Basil's ring. But what has this to do
With present matters? Basil is dead.
AMAR: Blood does not die unless it is renounced.
FABIUS: Then consider that I have renounced it!
AMAR: And the ring? But yes, you can renounce our blood.
Take it off! Throw it in the fire, here before my eyes.
Then you will be no more a Scythian.

*(*FABIUS *removes the ring, but hesitates.)*

Ah! you cannot, you see.
FABIUS: It would be an insult to Basil's memory.
I could, Amar, but I would not like to do so.
AMAR: I am glad you cannot. You are a Scythian at heart!
I always knew it, cousin. Now we can really talk.
You understand us because your blood speaks.
FABIUS: I am a Roman, Amar. You must not forget it.
AMAR: Yes, yes. Of course. That too! That too!
FABIUS: I am a Roman Soldier.
I serve the Emperor and Rome.

AMAR: We're all delighted to see one of our own folk
Getting on in life. My famous cousin!
You, at least, will understand my words.
FABIUS: I am not sure that I will. Sit down.
AMAR: About Scythia! About freedom! It is very simple.
We are easygoing people, as you know,
But people provoke us, make us angry.
But we are also easily pleased. O yes!
And if you please us, we are your men for life.
FABIUS: Rome cannot give you freedom.
AMAR: But doesn't Rome want to please us?
FABIUS: Not in that way.

*(*AMAR *sighs.)*

AMAR: Well, then, I can think of other ways.
Suppose, for example, you crucified Metellus
In a public place, abolished the tribute
And the land tax. We would immediately have a party.
People would think less about freedom!
FABIUS: How can a Roman general crucify your lawful satrap?
AMAR: Well, just do it without telling them! Why not?
FABIUS: You are talking like an imbecile.
AMAR: No! I have a developed political instinct.
But I know my people's temper, cousin.

FABIUS: *(Ironically)*

You amaze me.
AMAR: Well, if Rome goes on like this forever,
So shall we, dreaming of freedom.
FABIUS: I am sick of the very word.
AMAR: So am I, to be frank. What does it mean?
To people who are happy? Yes, of course.
If I am free to make an occasional tribal raid
To steal some calves, or a Bactrian girl or two
When I feel tired of my wives—then
I am free, yes. That is what *I* mean.
Cousin, what is going to come of all this?
You are taking Acte, I know. You will
Turn her into a goddess by the act! Reflect!
FABIUS: She is a hostage against your good behavior.
She will guarantee peace in Scythia, I hope.
AMAR: That is not very clever. They are now
Making wooden images to her—you know:
The sacrificial images we make for wars!
FABIUS: In the old days, it would have been enough.
AMAR: In the old days, we chieftains ruled by right.
Our people obeyed us without a murmur.
Not today. We can only control them
To a certain point, and after that . . .
Scythia is like a barn full of dry corn,
Already smoldering, Fabius, smoldering.
You will not blame *me* if it catches fire,
You know the spark will come from Metellus.
Now—does that sound sense or not? Speak!
FABIUS: Metellus may be replaced.
All satraps are not like him, Amar.
AMAR: If you would give me your guarantee,
I would tell the tribes. We would rejoice.
FABIUS: How can I?
AMAR: They would rejoice and praise Rome.
FABIUS: I am only a soldier.
AMAR: Well, then, I see it's no use, cousin.
It is very sad, but so it is. So it is.
What must be must be.
But still you wear our ring, you are of our blood.
I tell you what—let us give you a farewell party.
I have brought down three regiments of horse.
I'd intended to ambush you on the valley road.
Then my curiosity overcame me, cousin.
FABIUS: Three regiments! But your tribes are dispersed!
AMAR: They disperse easily, they gather easily!
To rescue Acte, I could have raised six,
But I had so many lame horses! Nevertheless,
I tell you what would be fun. Since
You are going to replace Metellus by another—
FABIUS: I never said such a thing!
AMAR: Never mind. Let us *pretend* you did.
FABIUS: I could not. How could I?
AMAR: You don't take my point. I could
Say that you were my cousin, do you see?
We could all go. Bring Acte too! Why not?
We'll say she's been invited to Rome
To discuss our freedom with Nero. Eh?
FABIUS: You're mad.
AMAR: It would be a wonderful send-off, don't you see?
Everyone would be in tears of joy and admiration.
Such dancing and music and such wine
Worthy of our Roman cousin. Do say yes!
FABIUS: Amar, you are a fool. I cannot,
And you know it.
AMAR: I am so bored with arms and soldiers.
We could have such a celebration.
We would drink to Metellus' death,
To Nero, to Acte, to yourself. . . .
Such tears would be shed, so much wine drunk. . . .
Couldn't you stretch a point for once?
FABIUS: Let us talk sense, Amar. This meeting
Is valuable, since it enables me
To warn you personally.
AMAR: To warn me?
FABIUS: This time, Scythia escaped lightly,
But if trouble should arise again,
Acte will die at once in Rome.
I have told the King Corvinus this.
You must tell the tribes, make them see it.
AMAR: Poor Corvinus! He is old and weary.
We call him King Weathercock—
Who blows the strongest turns his mind.
FABIUS: Do not neglect the warning, then.
AMAR: Dear cousin, I had pictured things so differently.
I saw us dancing together, embracing and singing.
Now I don't know. Maybe I will have to ambush you.
You make things so difficult for me.
FABIUS: That would be foolish, Amar.
AMAR: Yet I must not harm you for the ring you wear.
You know our Scythian family laws.
I could not shed your blood, cousin. You are a problem.
Perhaps we could take you back alive.
FABIUS: No. No one could do that. I am a Roman, you see.
AMAR: Well, I am sorry. We shall see what fate says.
But they'll be disappointed when I tell them
There's to be no party. We were all *so*
Looking forward to a farewell party.

(He sighs, then suddenly leaps to his feet with agility and bounds toward the trees. He stands for a moment.)

Then this is your last word, cousin?
FABIUS: I warn you, Amar.

*(*AMAR *laughs and disappears.)*

Guard commander! Guards!

(Enter a SOLDIER.*)*

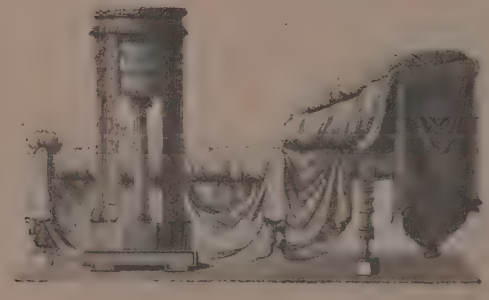
SOLDIER: There's nothing to report, sir.
FABIUS: Three regiments of horse are lying up
Along our route of march to the north.
We must strike camp at once, assemble,
And turn southward. Order out the camp.
Stand to for all arms. We march in two hours!
SOLDIER: Very good, sir.

(Exit SOLDIER. FABIUS *shakes his head gravely and takes a turn up and down. He looks at the ring on his finger. Then he starts to kick the fire out.)*

SCENE FOUR

A room in an inn on the Appian Way, somewhere near Rome. ACTE *lies on a bed, propped by pillows. A dim lamp shows her in profile. The* NURSE *is arranging some medicines on a table, front stage.* ACTE *has fever. She is restless and mutters confusedly. The* NURSE *crosses to the bedside and feels her forehead, sighing and shaking her head. Exit* NURSE.

ACTE: They were standing there, just as I dreamed them,
The autumn leaves turning and falling round them.
They said nothing: they simply looked.
It was like a fresco except that I knew them.
Afterward the man in the cloak came.
I heard his breathing, I smelt his breath.



Nurse! Nurse! Ah! his iron belt
Bruising my body. The pain, the pain.
And how Metanira cried out, such cries!
"No, No. What do you know of innocence?"
What could I reply to her? What?
"You were born a vampire, sister."
No. No. Metanira, listen to me!

(In her delirium, she raises her arms pleadingly and then sinks back. She gropes for a glass of water, drinks thirstily, and replaces it. She turns this way and that, half asleep. Enter FABIUS.*)*

FABIUS: Ah! You have fever. Galba told me.
ACTE: What is it? What do they want of me now?
I said I would write no letters tonight.
FABIUS: Nor shall you; you must sleep.
ACTE: Who says sleep?
FABIUS: It is I—Fabius. I have not countermanded the horses,
As you ordered. It is better so.
You will be in Rome tomorrow. Acte, do you hear?
ACTE: Who are you?
FABIUS: Fabius. Do you hear me?
I have ordered a physician to attend you
The moment you arrive.
ACTE: It was not that she was jealous;
He slew both our spirits with one clumsy thrust,
As a sword could kill twins.
We were so near before, and afterward
I knew we would never meet again.
And now she's dead, and he is dead,
And I am left among the living like a ghost.

(She laughs wildly.)

FABIUS: This is the last stage for Rome.
I came to say good-bye, Acte.

(She starts up.)

ACTE: Who is that? Fabius? Voice with blue eyes.
O my head aches! It is full of falling leaves,
Falling leaves among people in red robes.
I so much wanted to kill you!

FABIUS: My task is done, Princess.
I came to say good-bye.
ACTE: They say I have fever.
Will you feel my head?
Thank you. Your hand is cold.
FABIUS: You must sleep now. All will be well.
ACTE: Is it really you? Dreams are like waking up,
When you are blind, like waking up!
Galba says you are married to a Roman beauty,
The famous and lovely Flavia—what a perfect name!
It must be so nice for you. . . . Red lips,
And rosy skin and copper hair, so soft,
Like a squirrel's brush—so Galba says.
And Galba never lies. You must be . . .
So happy, Fabius—Roman, General, Conqueror!
FABIUS: I have a wife and a small son.
ACTE: You will not come to Rome? You do not love her?
FABIUS: I am under orders for Gaul. No time, you see.
I will bypass Rome on the western road.
I've given Galba my letters to carry to her.
ACTE: Were they long or short? Devoted general,
Great dreamer! Romans who always prefer to sleep
With cold swords, than utter honest words.
Well, cold hearts have the sharpest hungers—
So runs our Scythian proverb. Galba says
It was a most desirable match!
Well matched, General. Well acted!
FABIUS: Acte, we shall not meet again.
Forgive, excuse, forget my clumsiness.
Rest now and sleep; no more bad dreams.
Sleep, Scythian Princess—and so good-bye.

(He makes some sound suggesting departure, closing the door loudly.)

ACTE: O Fabius, Fabius, do not leave me so.
I am so lonely.

(He returns and embraces her.)

Ah! You are here. I thank the Gods.
I am cold, so cold. Rome feels cold,
The whole world is cold, except you.
I hate you, Roman, I hate you, hate you.

CURTAIN, ACT ONE

(Continued on page 95)

From the creator of Pogo, a joyous, affectionate, even factual history of the songs we call carols and the spectacle that has always been a part of Christmas

by Walt Kelly

Now is the season of the greatest show on earth. Who is not familiar with the rings, the decorations, the music, the individual and group performances, the exhibitions, the animals, the flimflam, the tinsel, the barkers, the hustlers, the sideshows, the candy, the glitter, and the noise? Well, probably nobody, it should be said, because Christmas is an ages-old festival that encircles the earth. It includes dancing and mummery, spiritual and ribald pageantry, pagan ritual, and deep religious devotion not even exceeded at Easter. As a piece of showmanship, both earthy and heavenly, it has no equal.

There is something about the winter solstice that urges man to indulge in pageants and singing, most of it to the gurgle of grape and grain. Long before Ye Goode Olde Days, the passing of which we are inclined to lament, the carnival had been predicated on the reappearance of the sun at this time of the year. Evidently in the dawn of history, it was a popular custom with man to dance and sing in praise of the sun god's wisdom in coming back to warm the gardens of earth.

It has been said that the church was one agency for keeping alive our interest in the theater, partly because of the effort by ancient pagan priests to convince the pious that, if a show was to be staged to celebrate the return of fertility, the temple was the place to catch it. When the concern with the mystery of rebirth finally fumbled its way to the faith of Christianity, the men of the cloth incorporated into the religious services much of the old ritual. The wise priest understood that the ordinary man was still an ordinary man and that he cherished the singing and dancing that had previously marked his adoration of life.

Pagan man was obsessed by a fear of death. His desire for a compensating rebirth led him to a worship of fertility. Consequently, at the first hint of a return of the lengthening day, he would dance in the fields with a maiden. It should be pointed out that his rather starkly identifiable gyrations were meant only to make the corn grow. Today, we often do much the same thing, indoors, winter solstice or not, and we city people grow very little corn. Maybe outdoors is better, if corn is the object. These dances, which seemed to go round and round, gathering partners and helpers like a snowball, eventually came to be known as *choraules*. At least in Greece that's what they were called. In Latin the word was *choraula*. The French had another word for it—*carole*.

When the formal or show *choraule*, as opposed to the earlier frantic leapings and kickings of the fields, moved indoors to the temple, it became a stately ring dance in which the dancers formed a circular chain, holding hands. They weaved slowly in measured rhythms around a chanter, or sometimes a flutist, who went through whatever tune had been set to the words of an earlier supplication to the sun god or, perhaps, to the goddess of fertility. Originally, the lyrics to a great many of these bald injunctions had been a little blue, unfit for the family type of institution which the more sedate churchmen had in mind. As a result, the Christian clergy wisely kept the tunes but changed the words. When the centuries had rolled by a bit, we find that the tunes, called carols, remained, but the dancing had about

stopped. The uninhibited continued to dance and sing in the taverns.

In fact, the church itself first adopted the stationary carol. It had to do this because a traffic problem was created in the narrow confines of most early places of worship when people danced. Thus the chorus, for the singing or chanting of religious music, was formed. Later, even this celebration was taken over by monks; the choir then came into being. So it was that the ordinary man had to return to the open, or perhaps his friendly corner saloon, to indulge in carol singing. There, if he did not receive encouragement, he certainly received stimulation.

Some of the dancing and also a good many of the earlier pagan fertility lyrics returned. By the late Middle Ages, the nonchurch or unattached winter-solstice singer, when he looked at all, saw that he was making an unholy show of himself.

Carols were sung not only for the Christmas season but for other fete days. They had become, if indeed they had ever stopped being, part of a true folk show. In England, carols celebrated May Day and Boar's Head Day, as well as many others. May Day was a gaudy day of dancing and pageantry, all to induce the gods to provide a bountiful harvest. In certain parts of Europe, women rolled naked in the dew on the eve of May Day for beauty, health, and, naturally, luck.

The connection of Boar's Head Day with Christmas is somewhat tenuous. The boar's head is a seasonal feast dish at Oxford, so it is said, because very early on an Oxford student was attacked by a wild boar on his way to Christmas Mass. He defended himself by thrusting a copy of Aristotle down the beast's throat. The boar was not the first to choke on the work, but he is the one most remembered, celebrated as he is in a Christmas carol.

"The Holly and the Ivy," a traditional carol, was originally part of the Middle English show that hailed the return of the sun. The ivy was considered female, the holly male. A holly boy danced with an ivy girl, and if they pleased the pagan gods, the English were sure of a good planting. Holly as an evergreen was also used by the Romans for their Saturnalian decorations, and one legend has it that Christ's cross was of holly, and the tree to this day is punished by being stunted and scrawny.

One of the cherished show pieces of Christmas is the yule log around which we have fashioned several carols. Early English custom, having nothing to do with Christmas, was to burn a bit of the log each day for several days to mark the lengthening of the daylight and the coming of spring. *Jól,* the Norse word for the twelve-day heathen feast that became their Christmas, is related to the Middle English *Yol;* from these roots were derived both "yule" and "jolly."

The need for lubrication of the pipes in celebrating Christmas in song was felt to such an extent by our ancestors that many were quite literally carried away. The practice of wassailing was actually the practice of toasting friend and stranger alike, and as enthusiastically as possible. According to whatever source you like, wassail means either to "be well" or to "be whole." The original term, *wæs hæil,* was never very clear as the evening wore on.

St. Nicholas of Myra, the original of Santa Claus (from a missal of about 1430)

"Ye Lads and Lasses, Go, Fetch Ivy, Holly, Mistletoe"

The Christmas pudding, nineteenth-century England

An American Santa Claus at the turn of the century

Nor were the folk who indulged in rowdy, if not completely debauched, public shows at the start of the seventeenth century. The gentry were quite adept at exhibitionism. There is an old story about King Charles VI of France, who was so enlivened by the heady show business of Christmas that he got into the act by smearing himself and several courtiers with tar, tallow, and hair. Then, chained together, they joined the drunken revel in the streets, cleverly pretending to be bears so that they wouldn't be recognized. All might have gone well had not some nosy bear-investigator applied a torch to the lot to burn off the disguises. Several courtiers were consumed in the flames, but the King escaped and presumably returned home unscathed.

Traditional boar's head

The English Puritans finally had enough of the public show, the fertility rites, and the drunken singing. Once they were in power, they banned not only the Christmas caroling but the celebration of Christmas Day itself.

"Down with the Old Heathen's Feasting Day in honour to Saturn and their Idol-God . . ." cried the Puritan leaders; and, when they had recovered their breath, explained to anyone not already intimidated, "We are persuaded no one thing more hindereth the Gospel work all the year long, than doth the observation of that Idol Day once in a year, having so many days of cursed observation with it."

"So many days . . ." can be explained by the length of the run of the Christmas show. It started several days before December 25 and lasted until January 6, or Epiphany. The days between Christmas and Epiphany were the Twelve Days of Christmas, and the zany goings-on are recalled by the carol of the same name. There was a young man who, evidently very much under the influence of love—or something—kept bringing his lady partridges, pear trees, French hens, calling birds, rings, geese, swans, and other poultry, not to mention milkmaids, pipers, leaping lords, and drumming drummers. This operation took almost two weeks, and the modern housebroken father would not hold still much beyond the first day.

Hauling in the yule log

At any rate, caroling activities fell off by fiat and remained dormant for almost two centuries. In the early days, the Puritans had the will and the muscle to restrain the songsters, and not many new carols were composed. However, as time wore on, Christmas celebrations were restored, and a revival of church music in England came about as the Protestant church developed. Because of new theories, the congregation began to participate by singing in concert, not so much as part of the service but as a way of remembering its Bible lessons. Long-exiled English Protestants, when they were allowed to return home, brought back from Switzerland many Calvinist hymns with the words of the Psalms as lyrics.

An eighteenth-century family decorates a Christmas pyramid

The hymns had worked well in their French and German versions, but when the English tried the same operation of holding to the original rhythms of the Biblical texts, they produced square-cut verses of masterful stolidity. Later, the Americans were worse. It was not until we were well into the nineteenth century that a revived interest in hymnody, not based on literal Biblical phraseology, brought the churches out of a musical desert.

Either as a cause or as a result, in 1818 there occurred a magical stroke of inspired genius, the creation of "Silent Night." On the day before Christmas Eve, in Oberndorf, Austria, the pastor of a tiny church, Josef Mohr, wrote down the words of strangely quiet beauty. Gripped by the verses, Franz Gruber, the organist, composed the music that has come to mean peace and the tranquil spirit of Christmas. Not only did these two make this Christmas song in less than two days, but they did it to the accompaniment of a guitar, since the bellows of the organ had been devoured by mice.

With the awakened interest in music came a number of new carols for the Christmas season. Frederick Oakeley, in 1841, put "Adeste Fidelis" into English. You can get into an argument about a good many aspects of the origins of what we usually sing as "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Some claim that an Englishman wrote it, some that a Portuguese did. Until recently, many authorities believed the Latin verse to have been composed by St. Bonaventura. It should not be forgotten that an interest in the Christmas hymn had been kept alive in the Catholic Church by such as St. Francis. It was he who had conceived the idea of the crèche, around which many Christmas lullabies that are now sung as carols were written.

A flood of carols were written and revived during the late nineteenth century; most of the new ones had such ancient themes that they seemed old.

Maybe it was the subject matter, King Wenceslaus and others, which gave us all a feeling that the Christmas show had always been full of peaceful harmony. In the twentieth century, visions of old sugarplums dance in our heads when we remember the old English waits, itinerant musicians and children who went from door to door singing and calling down blessings on the master of the house. We see everything to do with Christmas as quaint and colorful, if not sacred. Thus, with the advent of television and that modern ritual, the Office Party, we feel suddenly alarmed. Are we losing the true spirit of Christmas?

Actually our show is rounding into the second act, our own version of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Now, a good many people start rolling their yule logs early, and if we like to go fast, downhill is the best direction. The wassailing starts about two or three days before the actual holidays. Christmas parties, the exchange of gifts, and the exchange of fertility secrets, accompanied by a good deal of erratic caroling, hold up for a number of days. Then there is a hiatus while we recover our breath and set grimly about the business of the New Year holiday. The show must go on. And it must be admitted that most of us are good troupers.

We are dismayed, nonetheless, and would like to throw a rock through the television set when advertising makes commercial use of the old songs. But that carols are used in poor taste to sell dog food, fish bait, toilet paper, and other trappings of civilization should not make us quail. Let him who is without sin throw that first rock. And remember, at this time of brotherliness, one fact: Each performance has its roots in antiquity. Be not dismayed.

A sixteenth-century gentleman, costumed as St. Nicholas, distributes nuts

Traditional twentieth-century nuts collected by Walt Kelly

CARROLL BAKER: FREE AGENT

by Donald W. LaBadie

For the moment, examine the image of Carroll Baker. She is, at first sight, a bland but exquisite yellow Goldilocks Rose who, at thirty, could still qualify as a prom queen: the ideal silent-film heroine. Come a little closer, and the initial image slowly changes focus. For she is also a woman who has outlasted a broken, disordered home and a grubby siege of one-night stands as a magician's helper to become the wife of a brilliant young director, Jack Garfein (a survivor of Belsen); the mother of two; and a quiet, unpublicized convert to Judaism. Then she speaks, and her words create their own determined image. "I am a free agent," she says. "For the first time in years, I'm letting loose."

She has the power. Director George Stevens has said that Carroll Baker is "the most important film actress of the decade." Elia Kazan recently called her "the greatest young actress in movies today." In the six pictures in which she has been seen by the public to date, she has revealed something more specific: a range and versatility rare in American films.

The child of separated parents, she was raised by her father in a small Pennsylvania coal-mining town called Greensburg. When she finished high school there, she joined her mother in Florida, where her public life began with the kind of gaudy razz-ma-tazz she has been trying to flee ever since. In quick succession, she was elected Darling of the St. Petersburg Sanitation Department and Queen of the Tampa Cigar Bowl, both perfect soil for a Goldilocks Rose. Later, she danced at Florida business conventions, and finally became an assistant to Volta the Great, a magician who traveled his tricks day by day to city after city through the South. As magician's helper, she learned how to handle props, stand with one knee slightly bent and crossed in front of its mate, and, always, remain pretty. (It is important to a magician that his audience keep its eye on his assistant.)

By 1952, she had had enough of the tawdry circuit, so she headed for New York to try for some "class" bookings. These she didn't get, but within a year she was the Coca-Cola and Winston cigarette girl in television commercials—even better soil for a Goldilocks Rose. Then she got her first acting job. It was a walk-on in a flop called "Escapade," but one night she overheard members of the cast talking about the Actors' Studio. "They hated it," she says. "But they made it sound fascinating. I decided to try it the next day."

At the Studio, she was interviewed by Garfein, who was then just as unknown as she was. Garfein had her audition in a scene from an old Preston Sturges movie, "Sullivan's Travels." "She played a drunk," he says, "and she made something that could have been terribly phony very real." Accepted by the Studio, and encouraged by Garfein, she began to study with Lee Strasberg, and won her first real trial as an actress when she played a neurotic girl in Robert Anderson's play "All Summer Long." "I didn't know what I was doing," she says. "I didn't understand technique. My acting had no shading. But I could communicate emotion. That's what the audience got."

The audience "got it" so forcefully that after a few television appearances she was signed by George Stevens to play in his Texas saga, "Giant." Her colleagues in the movie included Elizabeth Taylor and James Dean, two of the most potent screen-fillers the movies have known. Yet workers on the set delightedly recall the café sequence between Dean and Baker, in which Dean, trying to steal the scene by using a glass as a prop, was matched by Baker, coyly playing with, of all things, a rose. The object had finally learned how to manipulate the symbol.

Then came "Baby Doll." Describing her screen test for the role of the wild, adolescent, thumb-sucking bride, Elia Kazan recalls that "she was only three minutes into the dialogue with Karl Malden when Tennessee Williams shouted, in true theatrical fashion: "That's the girl!" "Baby Doll" made her a Hollywood sensation; it also stereotyped her in the minds of the front-office executives at Warner Brothers, who are immune neither to their own publicity nor to box-office grosses. For months, Carroll Baker, sprawling two hundred and sixty feet long in a cradle with her finger in her mouth, gazed down from a billboard to titillate Times Square pedestrians. In miniature versions, this was how she was advertised in newspapers and in front of movie houses throughout the country. The customers responded; Warner's had a winner. But shortly after the picture's premiere, the first script she received opened with the line, "I am a nymphomaniac," and for years after, stories titled "Baby Doll Grows Up," or variations of it, appeared in national magazines.

She has been seen in four pictures since "Baby Doll": "The Miracle," a corny rehash of an old spectacular Max Reinhardt production; "But Not For Me," with Clark Gable; "The Big Country"; and "Bridge to the Sun." In none of them did she emerge so brightly as in "Baby Doll," but she was able to deliver, sometimes with scant help from either script or direction, four carefully worked out, polished, and individual characterizations.

This month, "Something Wild," the first movie she has made with her husband as director, will open in New York in time to qualify for the Academy Awards; as the victim of a rape, she gives a sensitive, fluent performance that is her best since "Baby Doll." She has recently finished a major role in the all-star "How the West Was Won," and will play the lead on Broadway in the new Garson Kanin comedy, "Come on Strong," early in 1962. Before the play, though, she and her husband will begin work on a new film called "Magic," which will draw on her experiences as assistant to Volta, the magician.

The Garfeins today live on New York's Central Park West, where they have nine rooms in which to enjoy their children and plan for their future together. Determined to break the "Baby Doll" mold once and for all, Miss Baker recently finished buying back her contract from Warner's; it cost her a quarter of a million dollars. "Films really stamp you in the public mind," she says. "That's why I battle about the parts I play. With my face and body, the studio could easily have turned me into one more sexy star. Well, Baby Doll played an important part in my career. She became almost a kind of monstrous genie, as big as the girl on that Times Square billboard. I think she's gone now."

For a few seconds, as she talks, she resembles the pretty Phi Beta Kappa who keeps putting on her glasses to make sure people will know what she is. A little quiet, a little distant, she seems to be saving up, holding back. On the set, she is reticent and shy until she is called in front of the cameras for a scene. It should surprise no one; the most moving expressions of emotion have always come from the depths of reserve.

Carroll Baker and her husband, Jack Garfein

42ND ST.

How it got that way

by Gay Talese

Times Square is an endless freak show in mid-Manhattan that shimmies with light, waddles with pigeons, and teems with tourists who disappear each week with about a hundred and fifty towels from the neighborhood's ninety hotels. It is a hurry-hurry, Pressing-While-U-Wait street that is irresistible to a screaming sidewalk evangelist who drives a Rolls, a pixie hotel chambermaid who writes novels at the Edison, and a group of magicians who lunch at the Dixie Hotel, exchange tricks, and can make everything disappear but the check. Times Square is an odd mixture of Scarsdale matrons headed for the theater, and of twenty-five-cents-a-dance girls bound for the Orpheum ballroom; of playwrights seeking truth onstage, and of little men in monogrammed hats seeking Teddy bears in shooting galleries. In unifying the ununifiable, in mating the legitimate with the illegitimate, Times Square is heir to a hybrid quality unrivaled for gaucherie, for colors that don't match, for sounds that don't blend, and for gaudy signs that flash on and off through the night:

"Girls," "GIRLS!", "Adults Only," "Shock Show of the Year!", "GIRLS!"

It wasn't always like this. Once the tawdry Forty-second Street movie houses were legitimate theaters, and at the Harris Theater, where derelicts may now sleep through a double feature for fifty cents, John Barrymore starred as Hamlet in 1922. At the Times Square Theater, which now shows cowboy films, Gertrude Lawrence sang "Limehouse Blues" in the mid-twenties. On the same stage, in 1926, was Anita Loos's "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," followed two years later by "The Front Page." Such musicals as the Gershwins' "Lady, Be Good!", starring Fred and Adele Astaire, packed crowds into the Liberty—the same theater in which George M. Cohan sang "Give My Regards to Broadway" and "The Yankee Doodle Boy" in 1904. Across the street, the Selwyn prospered, in its loftier days, with such comedies as "Three's A Crowd," starring Fred Allen, Libby Holman, and Clifton Webb. But now the Selwyn, like the nine other movies on Forty-second between Broadway and Eighth Avenue, is patronized largely by the sad, the sickly, and the shabby, and it is very hard to believe that this street was the cynosure of New York between 1900 and 1930.

During the early 1900's, horse-drawn carriages transported smartly dressed theatergoers to Forty-second Street, and some of the city's most dashing men lingered around the New Amsterdam, at 214 West Forty-second, for glimpses of Ziegfeld Follies girls. It was around the New Amsterdam that Richard Harding Davis first saw Bessie McCoy, "the Yama Yama Girl," whom he later married. It was here, too, that William Randolph Hearst, in 1918, saw Marion Davies, and this led to the smoldering romance that lasted until his death.

Nobody knows for sure who first called this area the "Crossroads of the World," but Diamond Jim Brady named it the "Street in the Midnight Sun," and Damon Runyon could not resist what he called the "tubercular light" of Times Square's dawn. Enrico Caruso lived on Forty-second Street at the old Knickerbocker Hotel, a short block from the Barrett House, where Eugene O'Neill was born, and two blocks from the Astor, where Charles Evans Hughes slept on the night he believed he'd been elected President. The Astor also was the residence of W. C. Fields, who used to bat a handball around his room until he got thirsty, which was often.

Historically, Times Square has always been an oasis. More than one hundred years ago, the "crossroads" was part of the Albany Post Road, and it was traditionally the first stop on the road for a hot grog. Forty-second Street had a small-town look then, with shops and small farms scattered here and there—the farms having once been part of the Eden family's gigantic Long Acre farm. The Edens' home stood where the Astor now stands. The Paramount Building now is on the spot where, on September 15, 1776, George Washington and General Israel Putnam met on horseback to discuss the movements of their army before the Battle of Harlem Heights. In the 1870's, when the neighborhood was called Longacre Square, it also was a center for carriage factories, stables, and blacksmith shops.

Times Square was officially named that on January 18, 1904. By this time, a subway had been built under Forty-second Street, the towering tower of the New York *Times* was completed, and the neighborhood was aglow with such names as Maxine Elliott, said to be the first actress to have her name spelled out in lights over the Square.

It is hard to say when the Square went on the decline and sold out to the movies, for its corrosion was slow. Perhaps the disappearance of the once exclusive restaurant, Shanley's—which in 1926 was erased from the Square, along with the old Putnam Building, and was replaced by the Paramount—marked the beginning. For the rise of the Paramount as a movie palace signaled the end of legitimate theater around Forty-second Street. The Depression provided the *coup de grace* for the legits on Forty-second, and the first all-talkies appeared there in 1928. As the legitimate theaters were converted to movie houses, the cheaper prices lured to the neighborhood an entirely different crowd. The carriage trade was gone. And though Forty-second Street has been under attack by reformers for years, the tacky tone persists today.

Nevertheless, each week millions visit the area, and thousands live there. Some derelicts and panhandlers rarely leave Forty-second Street, and when they can't sleep in movie houses, they curl up with a bottle on the sidewalk. Most visitors to this neighborhood, however, are tourists and curiosity seekers. They come because Times Square holds for them a promise that at any moment—any second!—something will happen to amuse, surprise, tantalize, or shock them. A man may try to jump off the top of a hotel (as one did from the top of the Manhattan on June 1). The son of a Navaho chief might be robbed (as one was in a Kinney parking lot on June 10). Half the lights in the Square may blow out (as they did, for more than four hours, on June 13).

Geysers of steam shot into Times Square in June, 1940, when a water main broke; and an ex-paratrooper, Leonard D'Attolico, armed with a camera, came floating down into the Square in May, 1947. On his way to jail he explained to the police, with typical Square logic, "I jumped because nobody ever took pictures

THE LAST REBEL

of Times Square before while coming down in a parachute." On July 6, 1960, Britain's walking vegetarian, Dr. Barbara Moore, came limping into Times Square after a 3,387-mile walk from San Francisco to prove her theories about eating. And Times Square was invaded by Japanese beetles one day in 1938, by Tennessee moonshiners in 1949, and by a lively six-foot snake on September 15, 1957. The police said that the snake, deposited by some joker in a litter basket, was quite harmless, and it was toted away by the Sanitation Department, along with four tons of other trash and cigarette butts that are strewn every twenty-four hours in Times Square.

Astronomical numbers of rock-and-rollers jammed Times Square in this generation just as a Sinatra-smitten mob did twenty years ago. Even larger crowds assembled in 1957 to hear Billy Graham in the Square; and, as they sang "To God Be the Glory," somebody pointed to a yellow butterfly fluttering over Broadway, and hundreds of the faithful gazed skyward. Seconds later, the police spotted two pickpockets at work in the crowd and nabbed them.

There are few tricks that are entirely new to the eighty-five plain-clothes men and two hundred patrolmen assigned from Forty-second to Fiftieth Streets in the Broadway area. Each month, about six hundred and fifty arrests are made there, of which seventy-five will be loitering girls, twenty will be gamblers, ten will be individuals carrying dangerous weapons, and a half-dozen will be narcotics pushers. But the arrests just as routinely include the bizarre in this neighborhood. On October 25, 1956, they arrested a Wagner College sophomore who carried a five-foot bow and two steel-tipped arrows and was offering to shoot apples off the heads of passers-by. He said it was part of a fraternity initiation. In March, 1960, they arrested men who'd been ripping out an average of six headsets and telephone coin boxes a week from Times Square and nearby subway stations. Sometimes the police catch criminals around the out-of-town newsstand at Broadway and Forty-third, for it is a habit of many egotistical fugitives to appear there a few days after a crime to see what play their crimes got in the home-town press. Most often, however, the police try to prevent crime by keeping the crowds constantly in motion around the Square.

"Keep movin', keep movin'," they say to the gathering around the sidewalk vendor.

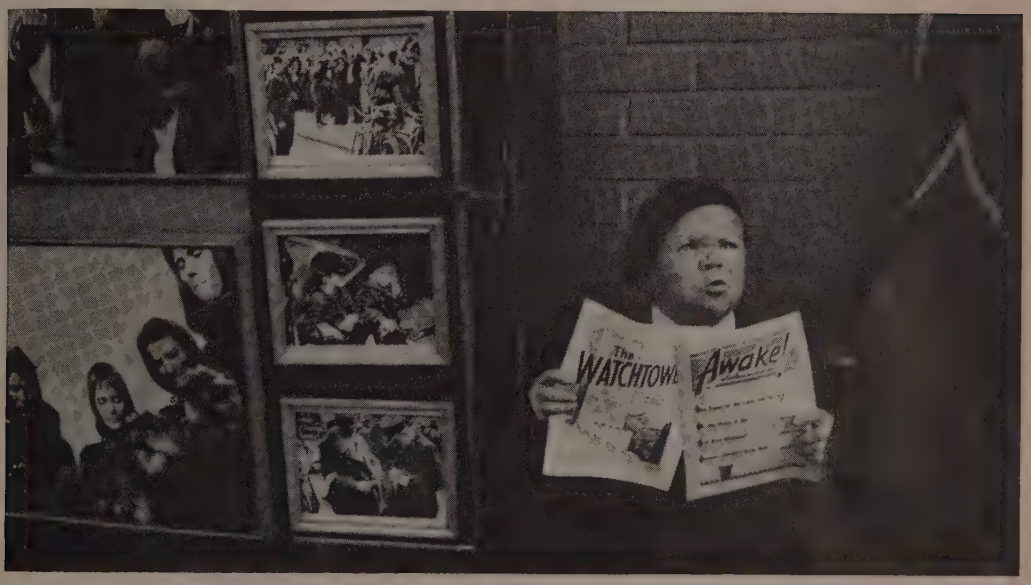
"C'm on, break it up, break it up!" they shout, when the bodies get too thick around the finger-pointing preacher on a soapbox. The police's theory is that crowds kept on the move have less chance to pick at one another's pockets or proposition one another. And so, from morning until night, like a big windmill, the multitudes go round and round the blinking neon lights. And their eyes rove, and their ears pick up a different set of sounds on each block.

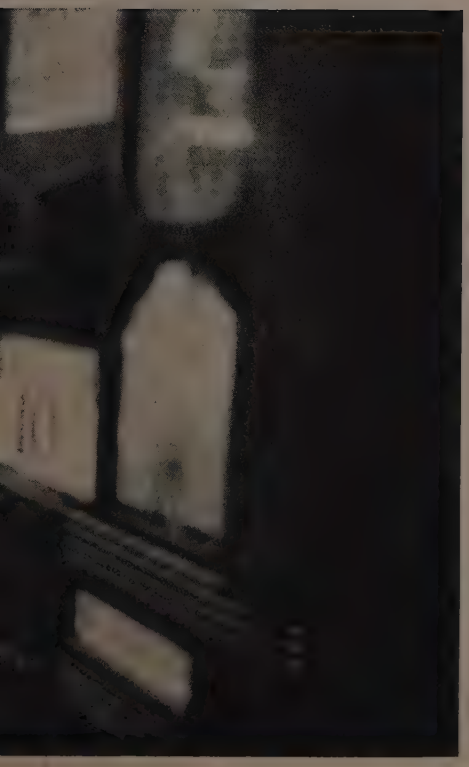
The sounds of certain blocks in Times Square are so distinct, in fact, that many blind musicians can walk along and know precisely where they are by the sounds they hear.

Most corners in Times Square, for instance, echo with the chants of spielers for sightseeing buses. "Bus leavin' now," they say, "see New *Yawk!* Bus leavin' now, see New *Yawk!*"

Forty-second Street itself rumbles with the sound of crosstown buses shuttling between the United Nations and the Hudson River, and under this can be heard the armies of clacking heels, muted voices, the sizzle of steaks flaming at chophouse windows, the clanging of metal beer kegs rolling into taverns. On Forty-third is the sound of fourteen-hundred-pound rolls of paper thumping into the printing room of the New York *Times,* and to the east, across from Town Hall, is the sound of shuffling feet on the sidewalk—feet belonging to some of the eleven thousand waiters who linger on the sidewalk awaiting assignments from the Dining Room Employees Union office. These are some of the waiters who service Manhattan's six

Photographs by Robert Frank


The WATCHTOWER
Awake!



thousand restaurants—from Sardi's to snack bars—and even out of uniform they look like waiters. They move with a special waiter's walk on the sidewalk. Many are flat-footed. They list slightly to one side. They smoke cigars. They are short.

A block north of them, on Forty-fourth Street, the predominant sound is that of bongo drums coming from a dance studio near the Blue Ribbon Restaurant. The studio's owner, Buddy Phillips, says that in the warmer months, when the windows are open, he can hear its beat a block away.

"There's also another sound on this block," he says. "We can hear the theater crowds walking by around eleven each week night, and can tell the different sounds made by people who've just seen a musical, as opposed to people who've just seen a serious play. Like when 'All the Way Home' was playing, the crowd passing underneath our window at eleven o'clock was quiet and reflective. But when the musicals let out, the crowds passing us are whistling, and there's a kind of jovial tempo in their footsteps."

On Forty-fifth Street and Broadway, the predominant sound is that of a high-pitched voice soaring up between the Astor Hotel and the Cardinal Tie Shop. It is the sound of Rose Harvell, a boisterous, birdlike woman who stands next to an American flag, waves a Bible, points a finger, and insults the multitudes of sinners that encircle her.

"Nine-tenths of you don't know Christ!" she screams, taking a few steps this way and that, her nose in the air. *"And you're all goin' to hell!"*

"Who says, Rosey?" they yell, these yokels who heckle her each night.

"The Bible says," she shoots back. "The Bible says that if thou shalt confess—"

"Booooooooo, Rosey!" they interrupt, hooting and shaking fists back at her.

"Amen, Rosey!"

"Go to hell, Rosey!"

Rose Harvell, who is a quiet Brooklyn housekeeper by day, enjoys exploding each night in Times Square. The insults do not seem to bother her any more than they seem to bother the half-dozen male preachers who scream from the Square's sidewalks. One of these preachers is a good friend of Rosey's, and he often drives her to and from home. He is the Reverend Raymond Vann, owner of a Rolls-Royce and three Cadillacs, and descendant of millionaire Indians from Georgia. From his post on Forty-second Street, this Cherokee with a soft, Southern accent tries to reason with—rather than dictate to—the crowd. But, being a man, he is more vulnerable than Rosey to the curses and threats of drunks who sometimes take swings at him.

Recently, after Reverend Vann called one of his drunken spectators a "sinner," the latter became very sanctimonious, clenched his fists, and took off his coat.

Then he pulled off his vest.

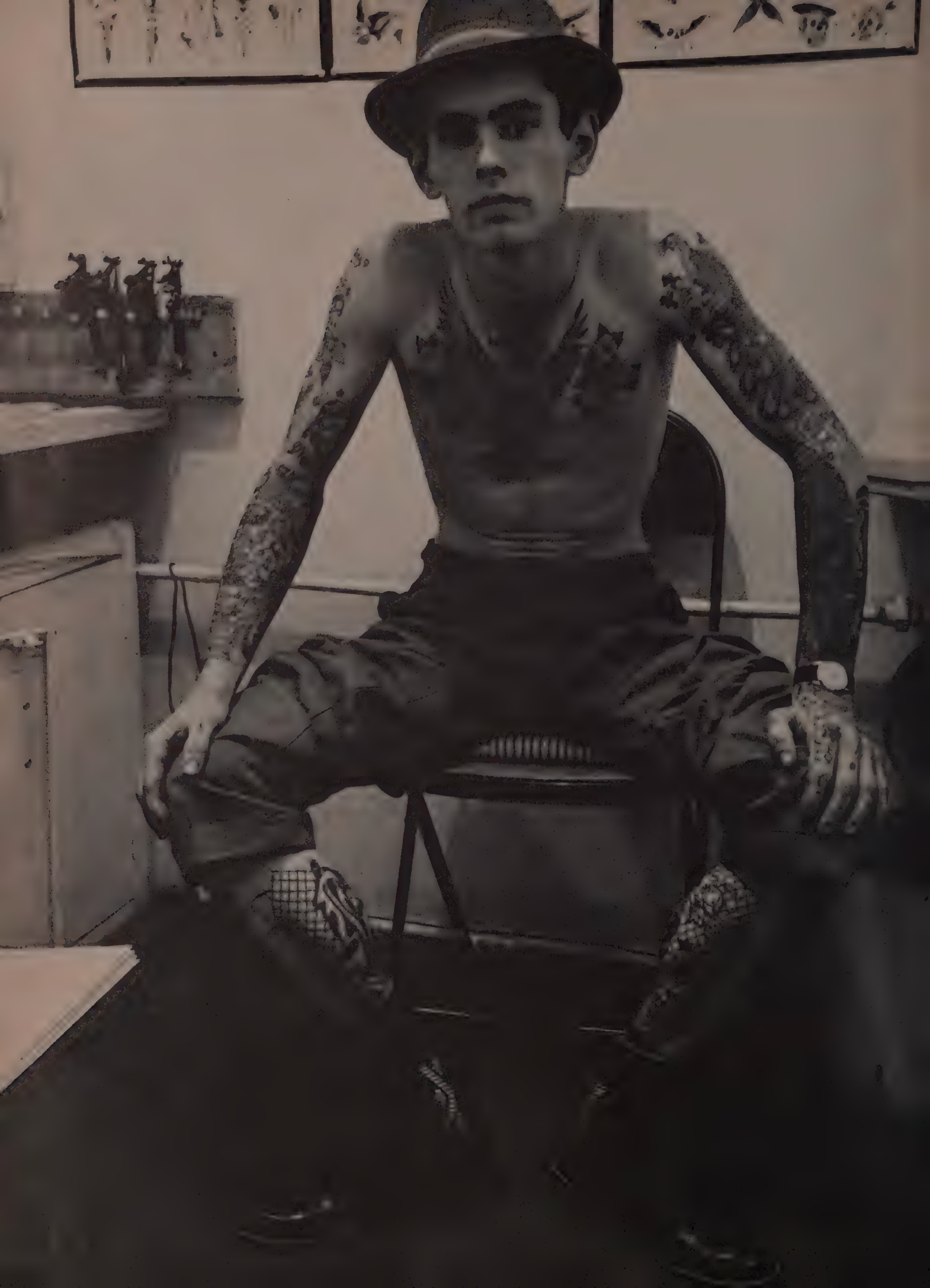
Then he ripped off his shirt.

"Next, I assume, he'll take off his pants," Reverend Vann remarked to the crowd, as he waited.

The man took off his pants—just as a policeman wandered over and arrested him.

Except for Reverend Vann's passion for automobiles, he is a rather ascetic man who claims to come from generations of rich but sinful Indian chiefs who rejected Sunday school and drank too much. At eleven P.M., Reverend Vann stops quoting the Bible, hops into his Rolls with Rosey, and purrs out of town—depositing Rosey in Brooklyn and himself at his home in Mount Vernon, New York.

Few big-time stars live around Forty-second Street. Only the old stars, the has-beens, live there—perhaps at The Lambs, or in rooming houses, or in the smaller hotels on the side streets. It is as if they wish to remain close to the old battleground of



their past triumphs. Ann Pennington, the old Follies favorite now residing at the Times Square Hotel, says she feels somehow "safer" in this neighborhood. When she strolls through the hotel lobby, Al, the barber, nudges a customer's neck and says, "See that lady over there? That's Ann Pennington, the old Follies girl."

The Vassar girl who lives at the Flanders also likes the neighborhood, preferring its Greek waiters and noisy news dealers to the clubby, suburban types her old schoolmates have become. She teaches school in a fine uptown institution by day, but then she rides the subway back to Times Square, and likes the change of pace. She is a lot more tolerant of noise and human frailty than most of the maiden-aunt teacher types from out of town who visit New York and spend their vacations sitting in Times Square lobbies scrutinizing everyone who comes and goes.

In the early evening these lobby-loungers watch the spiffy out-of-town buyers, all showered and shined—and secure in the knowledge that their wives are watching TV two hundred miles away—come dashing out of elevators to strut toward the Latin Quarter or Basin Street East with visions of a wild night in the big town. By midnight the lobby is crowded with schoolboys and schoolgirls on vacation. The boys, some wearing Confederate hats, try to flirt with the waitresses in the coffee shop and make wise remarks to the elevator men, who give them a quick once-over and dismiss them as punks. The lobby-lounging ladies watch the young boys and girls giggling, and the ladies shake their heads with disgust.

As they are shaking their heads, the Orpheum girls a block away are shaking their hips on a dimly lit dance floor in a building sandwiched between a Howard Johnson's restaurant and a Thom McAn shoe store between Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Streets. As you enter the Orpheum and stand at the bottom of a long staircase leading up to the music, you face a row of photographs displaying the faces and bulging chests of the Orpheum girls. Under their photographs are captions reading: "Let's Get Acquainted," "We Are Very Friendly," "Can't We Be Friends?", "It's So Nice Here."

Three sailors were reading the signs and looking at the girls' photographs, and a Broadway policeman nearby remarked, "Ya know, these guys all think they're going to go up there and get somethin'."

"Will they?" he was asked.

"Nah," the cop said, sure of himself.

Nevertheless, the sailors climbed the steps, paid sixty-five cents admission, and then, upon entering, were besieged by a half-dozen toothy amazons who swished over and cooed:

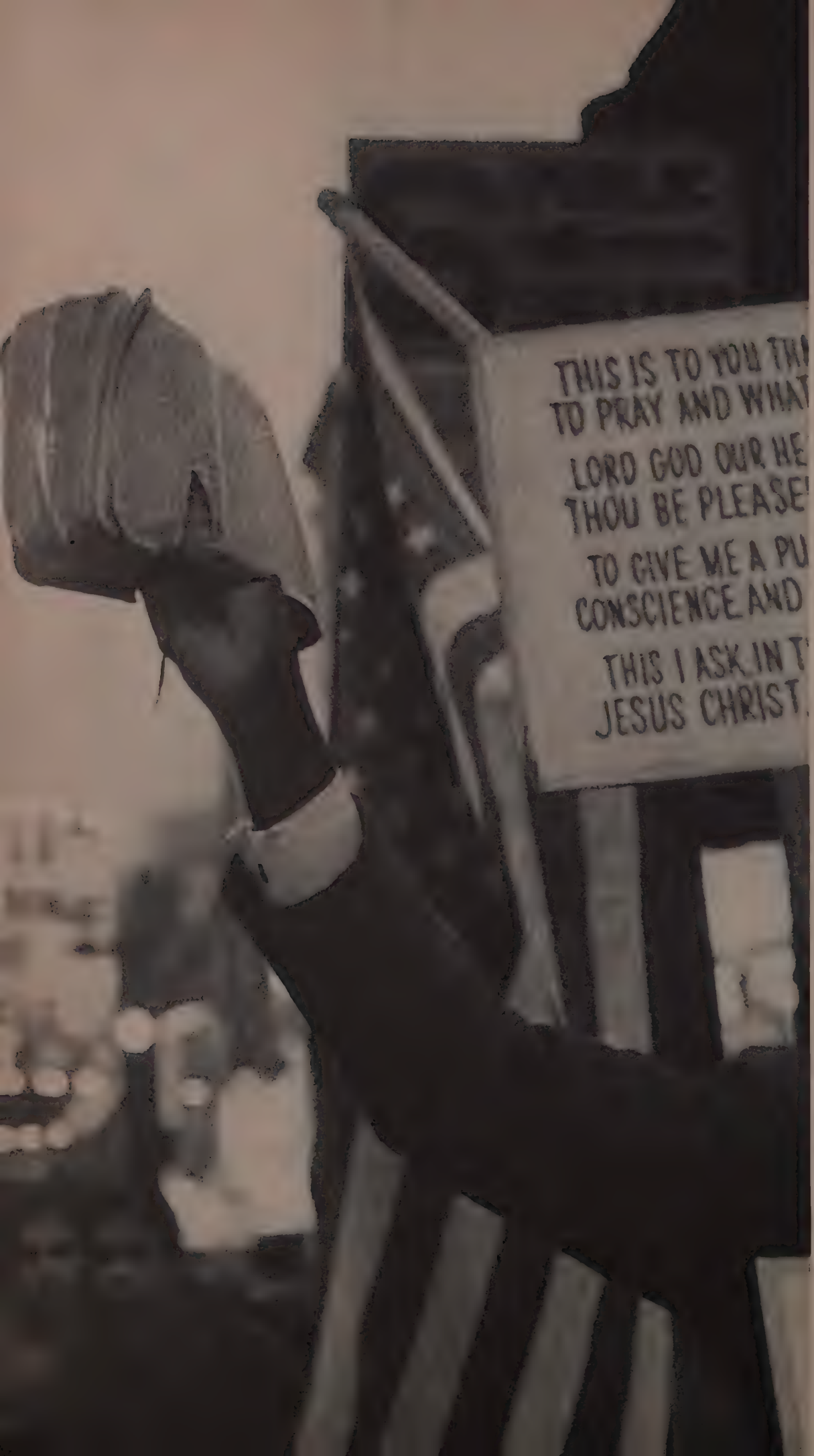
"Dance."

"Dance with me?"

"Hey! You're *cute!*"

The Orpheum girls were in competition for partners and twenty-five-cent tickets. But there is actually very little choice among the girls. Their conversation is equally limited. And they all smell of a bit too much perfume and not enough soap. They all wear silk gowns that display soft, overgrown breasts. They let the sailors rub thighs with them, but nothing else. After a few quick dances, the sailors turned and walked down to the noise of Broadway again.

At this time, the night-shift reporters on the New York *Times* are batting out late-edition leads, and across the street at Gough's Chop House the printers in ink-stained hats are throwing down boilermakers. Gough's is a legitimate newspaper bar with few, if any, Diners' Clubbers, advertising men, or expense-account spenders among its clientele. The place is noted for its steak and its troubled waiters, who seem always to be aspiring to a higher calling. They never quite make it. One of Gough's waiters had acting talent, but women ruined him. Another had


THIS IS TO YOU TH
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JESUS CHRIST.

mathematical talent, but horse-playing kept him in hock. A third had talent as a waiter, but he drank heavily, and when last seen he was weaving through the restaurant, past the bar, and out onto Forty-second Street, carrying a hot bowl of soup.

By one A.M., many of the electric signs are out, and the Camel cigarette hero, who blows fifteen smoky O's across Broadway per minute, stops puffing. The exotic Latin Quarter dancing girls are taking a break, and the Birdland musicians, in yellow berets, are leaning against a chartreuse Cadillac parked at the curb.

At one-thirty, a Shore Patrol car slowly moves down Broadway with two SP's scrutinizing the gutter for any of the crew that might have fallen. And in the side-street bars, the B girls are out—sitting cross-kneed on the stool closest to the window. Soon a man will offer to buy the B girl a drink. She will accept —not one, but probably three, four, or five whiskies with a Coke chaser. As she guzzles them down, the man will become suspicious. Can she hold so much? Or is it tea? He will switch drinks and gulp down hers. It's whisky, all right. What the man does not realize is that B girls, after sipping a shot glass of whisky, then put the glass of Coke to their lips and spit the whisky back into the Coke. They thus remain in condition to "drink" all night.

At five A.M., New York becomes dramatically quiet. The drunks who were booted out of bars at the closing hour of four A.M. are off the streets by five, and it is a bit too early for the early morning workers to appear. This is the soothing time between morning and night, when Times Square cab drivers often pull over to the curb and steal a few winks before five forty-five, when the first waves of coffee-makers, laborers, and other early morning employees ascend from subway kiosks and set New York in motion again.

By seven-thirty A.M., the bums and derelicts have arisen in Times Square, and are wandering into Automats for ten-cent coffee or, if they have forty cents, pay their way into the eight A.M. movies along Forty-second Street—there to sleep in the air conditioning through a double feature about dragons attacking half-naked girls.

Then, by nine o'clock, many of the familiar Times Square sounds come back. There is the clink of coffee cups at Horn and Hardart's, the whine of floor-waxers buffing the floors of bars, and the jingle of keys that hang from the waists of hotel chambermaids who push carts of sheets and pillows past signs that say DO NOT DISTURB.

One of the chambermaids is a fledgling novelist of sixty who, between making beds and vacuuming floors, polishes off prose in the linen room. Her name is Blanche Sercombe. She is small and spry and winks when she says, with conviction, "I'm a talent. I shouldn't be cleaning bathrooms. I'm a novelist!"

She paid a few hundred dollars to get her first novel, "I've Had My Tuppence," published last year. The book was praised, incidentally, for its style and wit. Now she is working on her second, "Treacle Pudding." Born in England, Blanche married a subway worker thirty-five years ago. He died, and she took a job as a wealthy man's housekeeper. She quit in a huff, however, when he wanted her to perform more than just her cleaning chores.

"Southern women," Blanche says, "are the dirtiest. Their rooms are a mess because, I guess, they're so used to colored people picking up after them." Blanche says she can spot an unmarried couple in a hotel by the way the girl holds her head. "Like this," Blanche says, demonstrating with her head tilted slightly down, and yet with an attitude striving for a kind of casual poise.

Early afternoon on Times Square, and the sandwich makers at the Gaiety Delicatessen are flapping their triple-deckers together at a rate of seven hundred a day. Across Broadway, a little man is paying for a manufactured headline to read: *Sam Sherman Hits Times Square!* And on Forty-second Street the assorted characters and freaks begin to reappear—the inevitable homosexuals with long, peroxided hair; the Negro lady in a knee-length pink dress who wanders aimlessly about, carrying a cat; and the endless variety of panhandlers.

The honky-tonk tone of Times Square has lured to it a generation of exhibitionists and crackpots—people who have no interest in the legitimate theater but linger outside the movie houses panhandling, propositioning, or just showing off. Forty-second Street also is ideal for the perverts, for they can function in the crowds, or buy what they want in the nearby stores—the masochists who patronize Sam Simon's for whips, the transvestites who slip into O. F. Bernner's "Wigs For Hire" shop for a new coiffure. Since the windows of stores reflect the taste of the customers in the neighborhood, it is not surprising that on Forty-second there is an abundance of shops whose windows offer such merchandise as beatnik cigarette holders, sheriff badges, garish Statues of Liberty that are thermometers, metal breasts that open beer bottles, and teacups with "God Bless Our Home" on them. And in the back of many trinket shops are the games of Fascination that award to the winners of six coupons a plastic-framed picture of Lucille Ball.

This neighborhood provides its habitués the same thing that the legitimate theater provides for its performers—a stage. From the sidewalk stage of Forty-second Street, however, the characters try to outshout and outshock one another. This being the standard, it is not hard to figure out why the ex-paratrooper, Leonard D'Attolico, chose it for his landing site; or why the walking vegetarian wanted to end up here; or why it is the mecca for hundreds of other oddballs or eight balls who regard Forty-second Street as the big time.

Most often, however, the people who make the news in Times Square remain in the public eye for only one day—like Mrs. Anthony Gherdol of 25-63 Forty-second Street, Long Island City, Queens. Mrs. Gherdol dropped the last nickel in the Times Square subway turnstile before the price went up to a dime on June 30, 1948. On that glorious day, she was photographed madly by cameramen, and every daily newspaper in New York carried her name, although two misspelled it. Mrs. Gherdol has not made the papers since. That's the way it is; people do something in Times Square, and, *because* it was done in the Square, it is news.

So the crowds return again and again to stare endlessly at the dancing lights, the passing faces, the glib hucksters offering "fifty per cent off." It is a show that never completely stops. It is a bad show, and the critics have panned it. But it goes on night after night—a smash!

Next month, Gay Talese turns from Forty-second Street's proud past and depressing present to outline a plan for future rehabilitation. It is a practical plan, one which could be instituted almost immediately and one which could have a far-reaching effect on New York's entire tawdry theater district. Based on interviews with leading architects, city planners, men of the theater, and residents and property owners living within the street's sphere of influence, the design is both conservative (in the best sense of the word) and liberating. Its most important immediate effect would be to meet the demand for legitimate theaters, thus, possibly, relieving some of the economic burdens under which our theater now labors. Certainly it would be a hopeful portent in a gradually darkening theatrical sky. Most important of all, a rehabilitated Forty-second Street would be a sight for eyes long since made sore by the decline of this street to its present sorry condition. The article will be illustrated with an architect's sketch of the proposed redevelopment. THE EDITORS

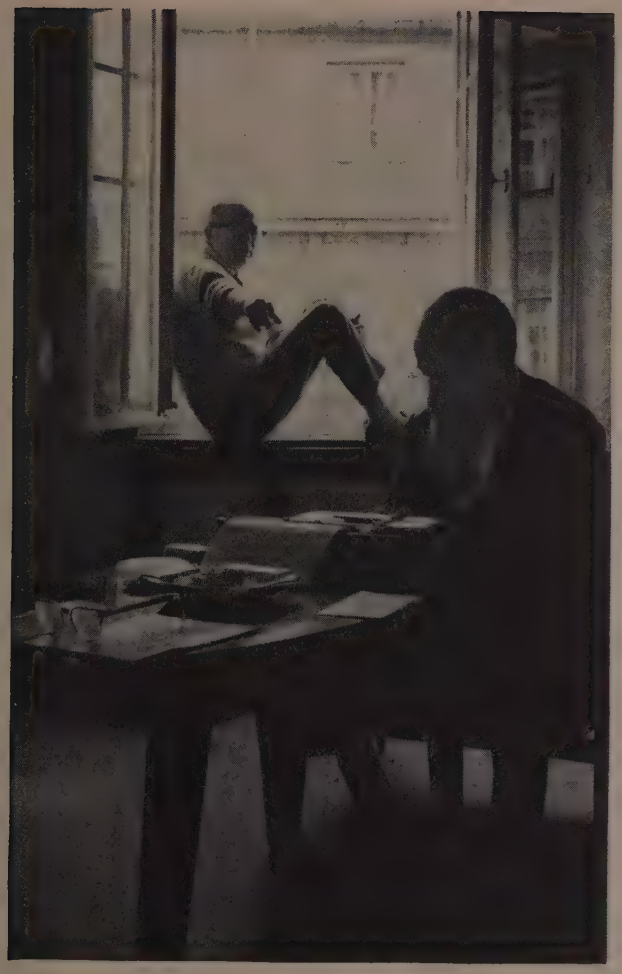
DOUBLE EXPOSURE: FRANÇOISE ORSINI

RONNIE BURG

Third in our series of promising neophytes is Françoise Orsini, a delectably pretty Parisian model. Born in Lourdes, the miracle town, of Italian-French parentage (and obviously combining the best of both Mediterranean strains), she has just turned twenty, has dark red hair, light green eyes, and beautiful legs. Besides modeling, she studies singing and acting in hope of a career as a comedienne. We show her here as she appears to two different photographers in two cities: Paris, on the left, and, right, London.

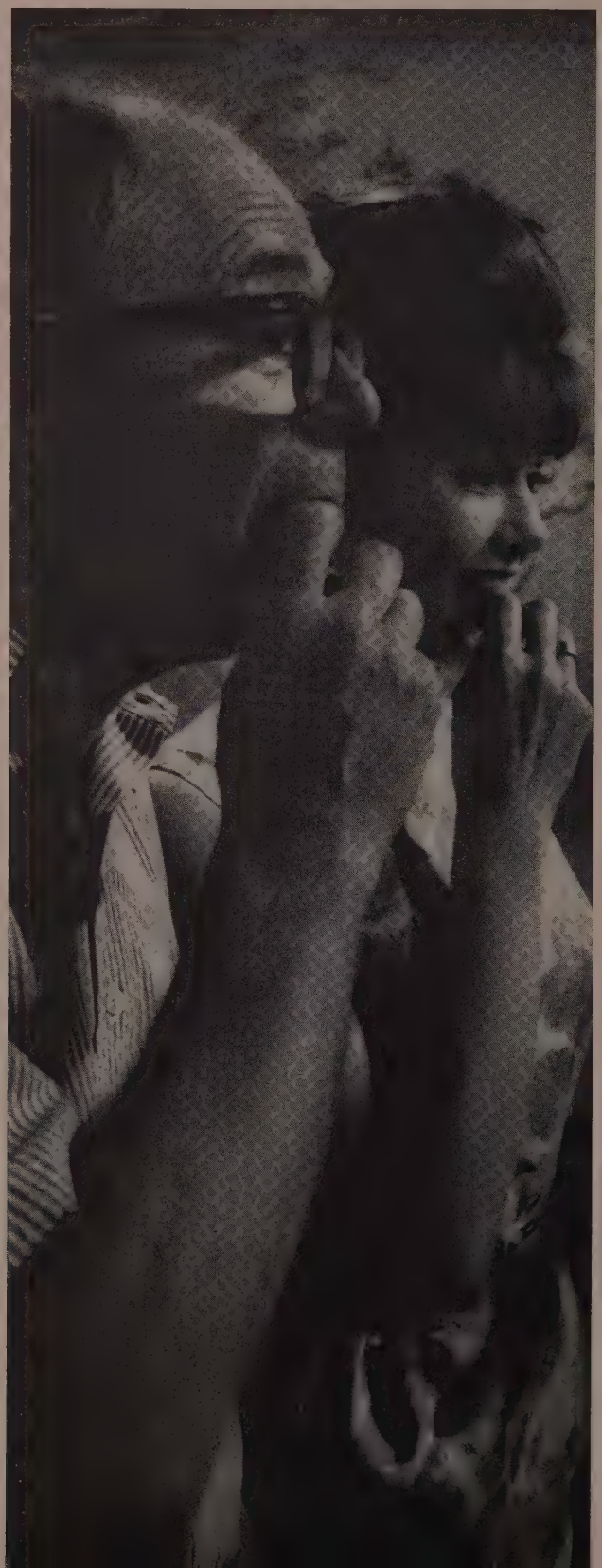
NORMAN PARKINSON

ONE, TWO, THREE WILDER



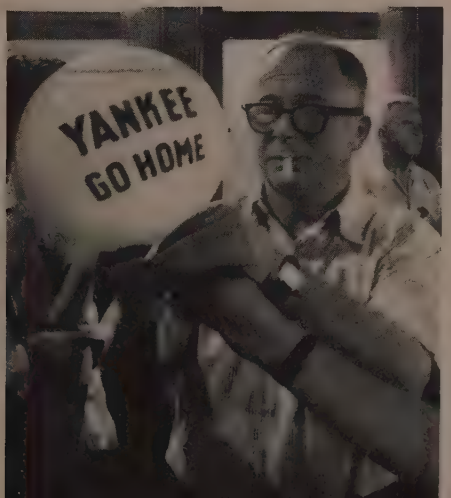
"Cold, exact, adroit, sardonic," the late James Agee once called the work of director Billy Wilder, and there was a time when those words just about summed up the Wilder approach to life and art. With pictures like "Double Indemnity," "The Lost Weekend," "Sunset Boulevard," and climatically, "Ace in the Hole," he established a reputation for hard, slick, cynical film-making. But these movies, good as they were, did not express all of the essential Wilder. He has in him tendencies toward romanticism and sentiment, not to mention the most quotable wit in Hollywood, the product of a mind, as William Holden once put it, "full of Gillette Blue Blades." In recent years, Wilder has blended wit and sentiment with this earlier cool-eyed precision into a comedy style that has resulted in a string of successes like "Sabrina," "Some Like It Hot," and "The Apartment." The old sharpness is somewhat blunted even as the old coolness is warmed, but the films are still pure Wilder, and he has found a huge audience for them. "What I look for," he says, "is whether the idea is true and entertaining. However, if I were ever forced to make a choice, I would prefer that it be entertaining." He was not put to that choice when he made "One, Two, Three" in Berlin. It is both true and entertaining, the tale of a Coca-Cola heiress and a Communist who find love in the midst of the Cold War. Wilder's commentary on both institutions is devastating. Here he is in the throes of creating a simple sequence—thinking it out (left), writing it down (above, with I. A. L. Diamond), and waiting it out while the camera setup is made in the Berlin Coca-Cola plant.

With Wilder, preparation is everything. One of his habits is to go off in a corner and try out himself the things he will ask his actors to do in their next scene. Here, while his young star, Pamela Tiffin, readies herself for the camera, Wilder readies her scene for her. Then he shows her precisely how he wants the scene played, finally sends her out alone before the camera to play her part. There is never any doubt, on a Wilder set, about who is in charge, but neither is there any doubt that the boss is a nice man who will listen carefully to all points of view before making a final decision on how to do his work. Wilder at work is quiet and unabusive, placing him among the growing number of directors who have abandoned old-school nastiness as a tool of their trade. He shares with the old-guard movie-makers only the furious concentration and energy he brings to his task. Because of his personality and skills, he is the ideal man to direct a comparative neophyte like Miss Tiffin, a former New York model who debuted in "Summer and Smoke" and who plays her first starring role in "One, Two, Three" with Horst Buchholz, James Cagney, and Arlene Francis.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GJON MILI

The sealing of the border between West and East Berlin sealed Wilder off from one of his most important backgrounds, the famous Brandenburg Gate. Undaunted, he built a replica on the lot of a West Berlin studio. This and other troubles may have led him to believe at moments in the validity of the advice printed on the balloon below. But more likely, as he fiddled with the prop, he was thinking of his next shot, for Wilder is a master of camera cutting, the difficult art of filming a picture almost exactly as it will appear on the screen, without the protection of alternative shots on which many directors depend. It is the ability of the disciplined professional—which, at all times, is what Wilder is, and one of the marks of which is his steady output of high-grade films at almost yearly intervals.



the real Ernie Kovacs is standing up

by Richard Schickel

There is no significant difference between the Ernie Kovacs you see on television and the Ernie Kovacs who shambles through life vainly attempting to cope with a world that is essentially copeless. The miracle he has accomplished, in the age of the forked tongue, is to be completely and triumphantly himself while doing his work, which is to make people laugh. The instrument of this miracle has been the evolution of a comic style which is the perfect expression of the lesson life has taught him.

This lesson may be summed up as a belief that things fall apart, and it is significant that he frequently learns it all over again in the midst of his attempts to share it with others. On his first special this year, he was playing the manager of an escape artist who allowed himself to be chained and weighted and sunk full fathom five in a tank of water. After a decent interval, Kovacs gestured grandly toward the tank, and the camera swooped triumphantly in to record the emergence of the escapist from his damp peril. It found nothing but a derby hat floating forlornly on the surface. From time to time during the rest of the show, it cut back to Kovacs, who continued to mime his faith in the ultimate triumph of his stooge while setting up light housekeeping at poolside in company with a comely assistant. Besides expressing Kovacs' essential belief that the best laid plans of frail and imperfect men must inevitably go a-gley, it also indicated his rather touching faith that, despite all evidence to the contrary, man must persevere just as if the world ran as well as its masters claim it does.

But even more significant is the fact that the actor who was playing the penny-ante Houdini very nearly *did* drown while Kovacs was shooting the scene. The wire that was to haul him up out of the tank as soon as the camera deserted him came loose, and only frantic effort and a spot of fortune prevented a genuine calamity. Thus for Ernie Kovacs does life imitate his art. So accidental has his progress through the world been that it is impossible to say where, in his work, a mere recording of reality ends and comic invention begins.

"There isn't anything," he says, "that you can't make fun of if you want to," and as a result of his haphazard life history, Kovacs *is* funny all day long, every day, and lives each day, according to his wife, as if it were his last. He has, as Jack Lemmon puts it, "like eight antennae out all the time." These are tuned to a wave length which picks up absurdities and indignities most of us would dismiss as too trivial for comment. Since he has been conditioned to believe that he exists in the midst of a conspiracy intended to victimize him, rob him of individuality, and probably drive him to the brink of madness and despair, everything Kovacs sees tends to reinforce his *Weltanschauung*. Its sum is to be found in the comically perplexed squint with which he habitually confronts the world. His eyes shrink to tiny, glittering points, indicative of panic barely under control. Simultanously, his nose essays a wrinkle of distaste, while his lips curl into a teeth-baring half-smile, at once hopeful, questioning, and suspicious. His cigar jerks to quivering attention, an exclamation point beneath the bold mustache which is like a despairing challenge flung in the face of adversity. It is an expression that's ready for anything—amusement, retreat, some sort of diversionary action, or, just possibly, some pitiful attempt at a shrewd offensive thrust which, things being what they are, he knows in his heart is foredoomed to abysmal failure. More often than not, however, the expression merely collapses into a look of hurt and puzzled disappointment.

In short, the look of Kovacs is the look of a man to whom life is just one damned thing after another. "Look where doorknobs are," he says sadly, rising to act out the average man's attempt to get hold of something that should be easy to grasp. "They're much too low. Or take shaving mirrors. Every day of your life you start all bent over, trying to see into them." He sighs wearily, and turns to the study he constructed in his California home. "I finally got things licked here," he says, "Everything is too big, for a change." Among other items, the room contains an eleven-by-eight-foot desk on which is mounted a panel from which Kovacs can control every electrical gadget—and they are legion—within his ken. In addition, there is a steam room, which is a favorite retreat, and a wine cellar complete with rubber cobwebs that go *boing* as they snap back into place after the removal of a bottle.

Reflection on the study leads Kovacs into a generalized comment on the quality of life in California as opposed to life in New York. "You take the time I needed twenty-five cents' worth of screws," he says. "First of all, I had to put on a suit and a tie just to leave the apartment. Then I had to tip the doorman a dollar for the privilege of walking out the door. Then the screws are overpriced in this hardware store. And finally, at the end of the week, there's a five-dollar item on my chauffeur's expense account—he claims he had to pay off the cops so he could double park while I ran into the store. Now, in California I can do the whole thing by hopping into my car, in my bedroom slippers, and driving down to the shopping center." Despite its obvious disadvantages, Kovacs still maintains a home in the East, but, unfortunately, he can't find it. It exists on a rustic lane in New Jersey, but "they have to meet me at the George Washington Bridge and lead me to it."

It is obvious that it costs Kovacs a good deal

DON ORNITZ

more than it does most people to navigate the perilous shoals of ordinary life, and he spends money with great profligacy in his vain attempts to gain control of things. This leads to a continual bicker with the Internal Revenue people, who seem not to understand that the things they regard as luxuries are absolutely necessary to a man listening to the beat of a different drum. If they were to spend some time with Kovacs, they would see that he is not the last of the big spenders at all. It is just that things happen to him. The laundry, for instance, keeps losing his handkerchiefs, which are, admittedly, expensive ones (because, as Kovacs says, "you never know when you're going to have to pull one out to wipe under your arms at some dinner party"). But he tries to economize in other ways—by buying inexpensive wash pants which will not represent a major loss when they, too, disappear in the wash. And, as if to prove his eternal faith in the system despite manifold evidence of its carelessness and sloth, he takes delighted pleasure in small things that work. "Like these slippers," he says, beaming. "I bought 'em for $2.98 and they're great. They give me a ball. Sometimes I just take 'em off and look at 'em."

All of Kovacs' comedy springs from his sense of victimization. At the moment, he is writing a book of letters from people who have run innocently afoul of the way things are. Messala, the noted charioteer, dashes off a note from the hospital to which Ben Hur has sent him, claiming that Ben persistently misunderstood him. "Forget that stuff I said about your mother and sister," he pleads. "It was probably just a summer rash anyway." There's also a note addressed to Zeus from the fellow who lived next door to the Augean stables. The man is pleased, basically, by the job Hercules did on the place, but something, of course, went wrong. "Just come down and take a look at my lawn sometime," he says. There follows a lengthy exchange of notes in which the anguished little man seeks restitution for the damage done to his property. Naturally, nothing comes of his protest.

It is, indeed, a wonder that anything ever came of Ernie Kovacs. His comic gifts he attributes to his Hungarian heritage. His mother, he says, was a born *raconteuse,* and he recalls that his father's "idea of a pretty full night was to hire an organ grinder to play on the police chief's lawn at 3 A.M." His childhood in Trenton, New Jersey, was devoted to such activities as drawing footprints across the floor of his room, up the wall, across the ceiling, and out the window. But by the time he finished high school in Trenton, he had not learned how to do anything that would add appreciably to the Gross National Product. "I couldn't even pull crab grass," says Kovacs. "I'd be out there trying and my father would come along and say, 'Here, better let me do that.'" In quiet desperation, Kovacs turned to show business and knocked around in summer stock until a lingering illness hospitalized him for a year. An offer to direct a play, for the princely sum of a hundred dollars, caused him to arise from his sickbed, sneak out of the hospital, and go to work. One of the producers, of course, absconded with all the money that had been raised through an ambitious advance ticket sale campaign. From the debacle Kovacs salvaged a string of Christmas tree lights—previously bought with his own money—and carried them home to the family, which had been living on little more than the hope of that $100 fee.

Shortly thereafter, Kovacs left show business for retailing. He got a job in a drugstore. It paid fourteen dollars a week, it was in Princeton, an hour's drive from home, and it was "a very long store." This meant that Kovacs had to trudge back and forth from the front of the store, where the customers were, to the back, where the more popular items of merchandise were inexplicably kept. "You think they'd walk back with you? Not a chance. You'd go get the thirty-nine-cent toothpaste and then they'd decide to buy the fifty-nine-cent kind. You'd bring that, and they'd decide they had to have a toothbrush, too. You got an hour for lunch, and they measured that from the time you left the counter, not the time you walked out the front door."

Ultimately, fortune smiled on Kovacs. He was offered a job in another drugstore right in Trenton. Among its inducements were a two-dollar raise and the prospect of not having to devote a third of his salary to gas and oil. He recalls that the manager of the long drugstore reacted much as though Kovacs had been a nuclear physicist announcing that he intended taking a little rest in Russia. "That's the way it is," chimed in an eavesdropping female coworker. "You train them, and then, just when they're worth something, they quit."

Kovacs thereupon entered a period of almost maniacal work. In addition to his career in drugs, he was working nights at a radio station and, whenever he could grab a minute, writing a daily newspaper column. He was paid a quarter an inch for the column, and he found a neat dodge for lightening the load. He would denounce something like the sale of poppies on Armistice Day as corrupt and immoral, then wait for the mail to pour in. This he would proceed to type up and submit at his usual rates.

The feature of his radio work was a weekly broadcast of the wrestling matches, about which he knew nothing. He sent a record of one of the best of these to a television station in Philadelphia which, like many another station in those prehistoric days, was doing well with wrestling. "I figured I could always learn something about wrestling if they hired me," says Kovacs.

They did. But on his first day at work he discovered that they hadn't even opened the record he had sent them. Their grounds for hiring him remain obscure, but his duties are a matter of public record. He became the host of an afternoon cooking show on which local chefs turned up to demonstrate their favorite dishes.

One memorable day, one of the guests opened his bag and plopped a pound of ground meat on the table. "Already I could feel the fear gnawing at me," Kovacs recalls. In a matter of minutes, the man had proceeded to describe and then make a set of perfectly admirable hamburgers, which he popped on the fire and settled back to watch cook. Kovacs, left with twenty-five minutes or so to fill, asked the chef what he would suggest serving along with the hamburgers.

"Whatever you like," replied the cook.

"Well, for instance?" Kovacs persisted.

"Everybody likes something different," the man replied. "I wouldn't presume to tell people what to eat with their hamburgers."

"Listen," Kovacs snarled, "it doesn't take any mental giant to make a hamburger. Now, what do you do to brighten them up?"

Whereupon, the two fell into a time-consuming wrangle over garnishes, which persisted through the program's allotted span. Another time, he threw together something called "Eggs Scavok" (spell it backward) when one of the guests failed to show up. The dish, which Kovacs introduced as a family favorite, was in reality concocted from miscellany that a desperate assistant had scooped off the shelves of a nearby grocery. It boiled over while Kovacs was doing a commercial, and it nearly asphyxiated him as he finished the show. But the bit was funny, and he was rewarded with an early-morning show, at a time when most stations were running test patterns, and it was on it that the frenetic Kovacs television style began to emerge. The singer on the show was a young lady named Edie Adams, who, of course, became Mrs. Kovacs some years later.

Their morning idyll was broken when Kovacs failed to resist

an impish impulse on a movie show he was hosting. Toward the end of a reel, just before Kovacs was to come on with a commercial, Walter Brennan staggered out of a door, laden with a huge vat of ink. He carefully set it down, only to be confronted by the bad guys, who promptly gunned him down.

"Boy, it's a good thing he set down that ink," Kovacs commented and he was fired out of hand, which left him available for a job in New York—also a morning show.

It was here that he came into his own. "We did that show on a budget of about sixty-five dollars a week," he says. "We used to sneak down the hall to another studio and steal their props and sets, quick do a song using them, and then sneak them back." So poverty-stricken was the show that the Nairobi Trio's salary was paid, not by genuine advertisers but by the freewill offerings of corporations that expected vast quantities of plugs in return. The show had so many of them that Kovacs finally brought in a particularly strident cash register and set it up backstage. It clanged and clattered whenever a plug was inserted. It was Kovacs' way of keeping some semblance of integrity.

From this show it was but a hop, skip, and a flop to the networks. Kovacs was installed opposite Milton Berle, where he found himself in trouble right from the start. "On the first show, we were doing a satire on 'What's My Line?' I had on this diving suit, and the panel was trying to guess what I did. You know, they were guessing I was a typist or something. Anyway, the director froze, and there I was in this suit, grabbing at cameramen, trying to get them to take my picture."

Shattering as this experience was, it gave Kovacs a toehold on the big rock-candy mountain of success. He scrabbled from it to one thing and another, never finding long-term television outlets, but contributing a number of notable character portrayals in movies. He was, as they say, the one good thing in a succession of indifferent pictures. The best were his portrayals of drunken writers—certainly the definitive works on this subject in our time—in "Bell, Book, and Candle" and in "Strangers When We Meet"; a befuddled Cuban sadist in "Our Man in Havana"; and the meanest man in the world in a picture the title of which Columbia kept changing but which was mostly called "It Happened to Jane."

"I've been lucky," Kovacs says with a shrug. "I've never worked at acting. Mostly it's a drag. You stand around and stand around, you wait and wait to do your scene." "Ernie," says Lemmon, "has too many creative juices ever to be satisfied by acting. He needs more stimulation than it affords."

Kovacs' self-image is that of a writer, and he spends a good deal of time hunched over the typewriter. His first novel, "Zoomar," had a certain success, and, in addition to his book of letters, he's currently finishing up an essay tentatively entitled "How to Talk Good at Gin." He's also started another novel, but in typically Kovacian fashion got bogged down in the 1,100 magazines he bought as guides to American manners and mores, circa 1910, the period in which his tale begins.

At the moment, of course, most of his creative juices are being poured into the seven half-hour specials he's doing, one each month, on ABC. And it is on these that he is accomplishing something truly remarkable, creating a style of comedy especially for television, which has never bothered with such trifles. Mostly its comedians have borrowed techniques from vaudeville, nightclubs, and radio, where it was necessary merely to stand up and talk funny. Attempts at comic acting have been, generally speaking, equally crude, overcomplicated blends of physical and gag humor with no point of view and too many things to say.

Kovacs' shows are, to begin with, pure Kovacs, expressing one man's—rather than a stable of writers'—peculiarly cockeyed view of things. They have, as Jack Mogulescu, his sponsor's vice-president-in-charge-of-Ernie, suggests, "a great deal of suspense, because you're never sure what he's going to do next." They are almost completely silent, except for a tinny musical accompaniment, and they make their points visually and with an emphasis suitable to a tiny screen that flickers amid the chronic distractions of the American home. His shows usually consist of a couple of running visual gags to give them a rude continuity, some quick blackouts, one or two slightly longer sketches (two or three minutes in length) and, as the chef-d'œuvre, some of the most complicated synchronizations of music and visual material ever to be witnessed in the privacy of your easy chair. These are Kovacs' particular pride and joy. He will listen to something like two hundred different albums in order to find the music he wants. Then he will play it over and over and over, stop watch in hand, huge sheets of paper before him. On these he records the length of time particular sections of the music take and, with a set of almost undecipherable hieroglyphics, indicates the "visuals" he wants to accompany the music. He has been known to need a different shot each second for thirty seconds to get the effect he wants on tape. Unlike a film director, he can't cut and splice these synchronizations together in the editing room. He must do his cutting with the camera while the tape is running. It is all terribly difficult, but it is Kovacs' way of proving to himself—and to anyone else who is interested—that he can master the world of things when he has to.

The effect of all this was summed up by a young lady named Maggi Brown, who works on the shows: "It happens so fast that you don't have time to digest all that he's done. But that's all right. It feels good inside your mind."

This is precisely the feeling another generation used to get when it walked out after a silent comedy that featured Chaplin or Keaton, Lloyd, or Harry Langdon. If you want to get fancy about it, you can say that Kovacs is the modern heir to the great comic tradition of the silent screen, a tradition which collapsed when the mass media learned to talk, when their masters realized that there was something terribly subversive contained in the comic confrontation of the Little Man and the machines and institutions of Modern Times.

All of which, to use a phrase much on Kovacs' lips, is probably "laying it on too heavy." One might just note, however, that Ernie Kovacs has had a terrible time establishing his brand of comedy on the networks, and that it is only since he found his present sponsors, who have given him carte blanche themselves and protect him from the fainthearted meddlers who infest network and advertising agency offices, that he has been able to develop his style to its highest flowering. "It's unfortunate," says Mogulescu, "that the top network executives don't recognize Ernie for what he is—a television pioneer. They ought to have the good sense to give him a place to experiment freely. Television will become great only when a lot of people begin to understand, as Ernie does, that it has unique technical requirements which must be mastered as Ernie tries to."

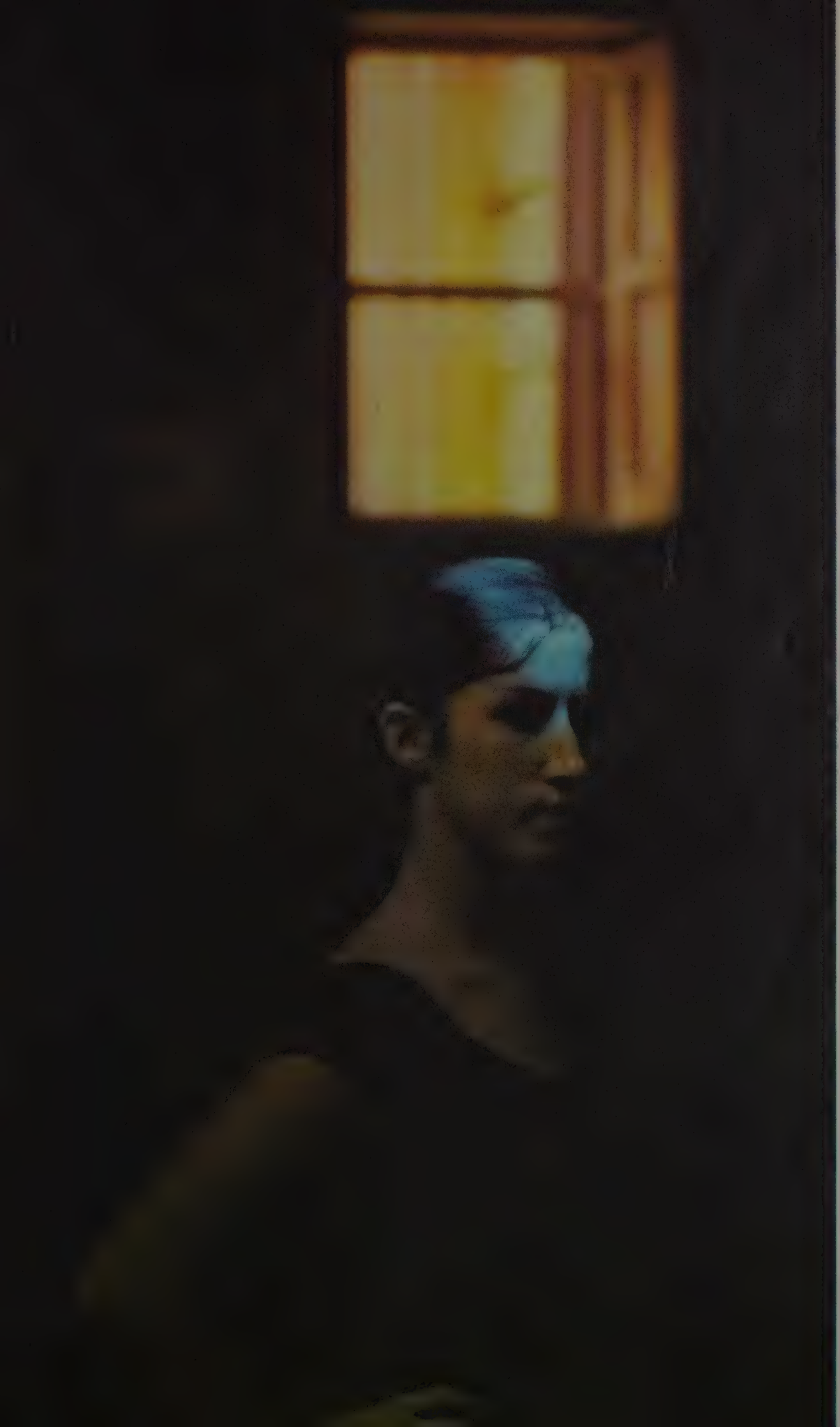
As for Kovacs, he is at last happy with his working conditions, a fact that seems to both surprise and worry him. With no battles to fight, and with plenty of time to work out his shows, he is able to concentrate on the detailed work which his kind of comedy entails. The result is an almost perfect blending of style and viewpoint. It's possible that the blend, like so much of Kovacs' history, is purely accidental. But, given his peculiar point of view, it is much more logical to say that the one inevitability of his life was the discovery and adaptation of the style of the Old Masters as the vehicle for communicating his vision—so like theirs—of the bedeviled condition of the individual in a world that has grown much too big and much too complicated.

For the first time in an American publication, SHOW presents a pictorial report on the performing arts in Cuba.

DATELINE: CUBA

SERGIO LARRAIN/MAGNUM

Fidel Castro has used the medium of television as a means of power as no other man in contemporary history has. Over TV, he issues orders, declares new laws, and sends people to exile or death by denunciation. For Fidel suddenly to take over three or four hours is commonplace.



This young dancer at left is a member of the government-backed ballet troupe headed by the internationally famous, Cuban-born Alicia Alonso.

On the two following pages are members of the Ballet de Cuba at rehearsal in Havana. Right, looking in the mirror to fix her hair, is Alicia herself. The girl with the glasses is Laura, Alicia's daughter and also a leading dancer in the company.

BRUCE DAVIDSON/MAGNUM

Photographs by Bruce Davidson/Magnum

Top: Music is another art exploited by the government to divert its people. With the Cuban flag as a reminder in Niche's, a small but colorful spot, the dancing and the music are vivid indications of an African origin, the kind of music being emphasized by the government. Despite the motives, the results are interesting.

Center: In a section known as Old Havana, a little bar and restaurant called La Bodeguita del Medio was long a stamping ground for intellectuals. Most have, of course, fled Cuba, but the few who remain still gather. Guitarist Carlos Puebla often plays here; he has become a minstrel of the revolution, composing songs on topical subjects ranging from invasions to the agrarian reform, and always singing the praise of the government.

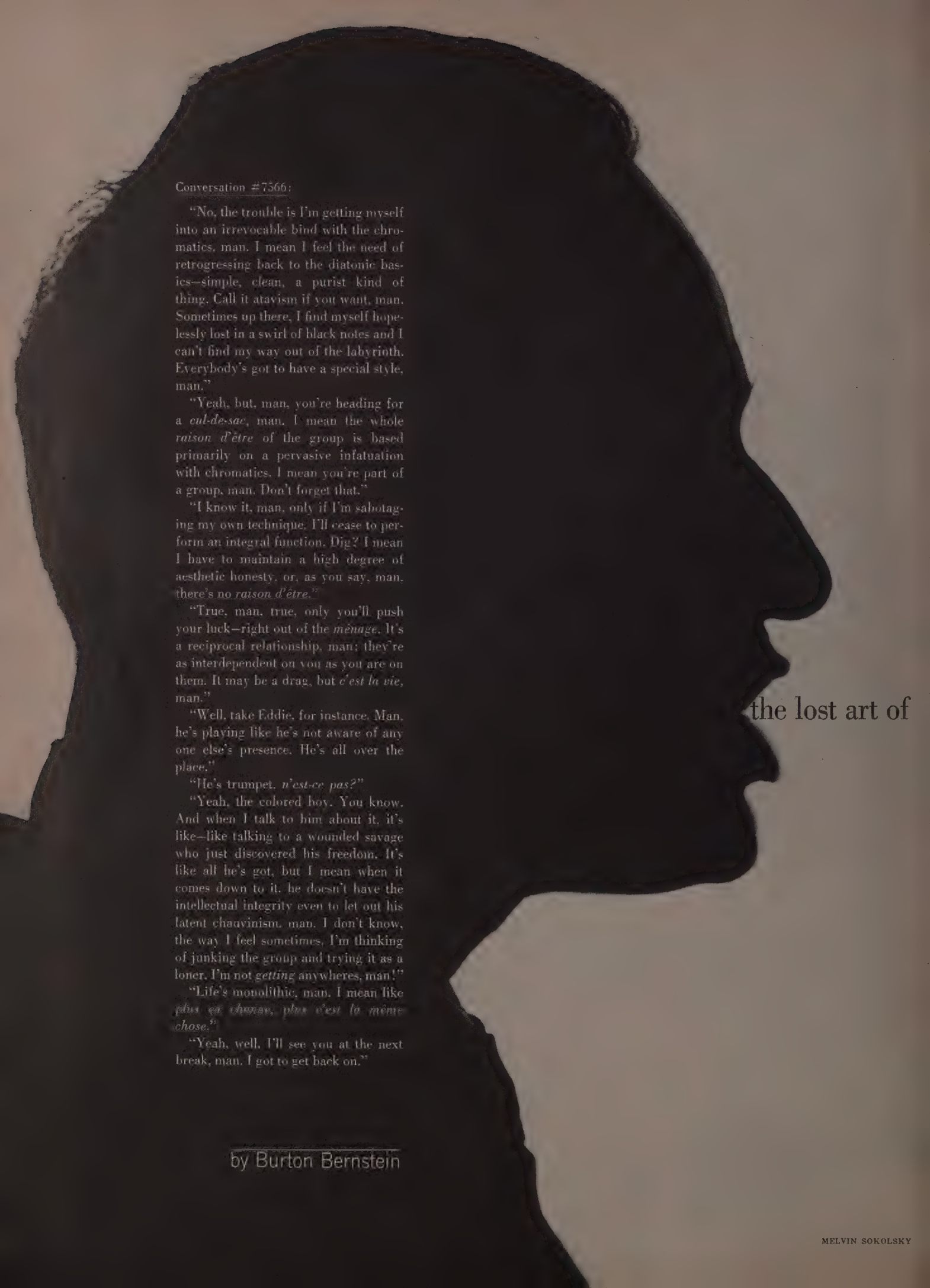
Left: Employees of the Department of Health give a concert in the patio of their office building.

Right: Peasants from the country have been brought to Havana to study. When they finish, they'll be sent home to teach. While in Havana, the student musicians live and work in homes confiscated from Cubans who have been forced into exile.

The actor above is rehearsing a pantomime in a class at the Elenco Nacional, a department of the national school for professionals. They will be sent into the countryside to organize and direct productions. The new plays being written in Cuba deal with revolutionary themes: the schism between a middle-class father and a son who wanted to join Castro in the mountains; the saving of a streetwalker's soul by the "new order."

Scene during a television rehearsal. The country's two channels are government-owned, have no commercials but go heavy on popular music and speeches.

In all aspects of the performing arts, especially movies, one is reminded of Castro's revolution. This scene is from "Rebels," an episode from "Tales of the Revolution," one of the country's four feature-length films.



the lost art of

Conversation #7566:

"No, the trouble is I'm getting myself into an irrevocable bind with the chromatics, man. I mean I feel the need of retrogressing back to the diatonic basics—simple, clean, a purist kind of thing. Call it atavism if you want, man. Sometimes up there, I find myself hopelessly lost in a swirl of black notes and I can't find my way out of the labyrinth. Everybody's got to have a special style, man."

"Yeah, but, man, you're heading for a *cul-de-sac*, man. I mean the whole *raison d'être* of the group is based primarily on a pervasive infatuation with chromatics. I mean you're part of a group, man. Don't forget that."

"I know it, man, only if I'm sabotaging my own technique, I'll cease to perform an integral function. Dig? I mean I have to maintain a high degree of aesthetic honesty, or, as you say, man, there's no *raison d'être*."

"True, man, true, only you'll push your luck—right out of the *ménage*. It's a reciprocal relationship, man; they're as interdependent on you as you are on them. It may be a drag, but *c'est la vie*, man."

"Well, take Eddie, for instance. Man, he's playing like he's not aware of any one else's presence. He's all over the place."

"He's trumpet, *n'est-ce pas?*"

"Yeah, the colored boy. You know. And when I talk to him about it, it's like—like talking to a wounded savage who just discovered his freedom. It's like all he's got, but I mean when it comes down to it, he doesn't have the intellectual integrity even to let out his latent chauvinism, man. I don't know, the way I feel sometimes, I'm thinking of junking the group and trying it as a loner. I'm not *getting* anywheres, man!"

"Life's monolithic, man. I mean like *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*."

"Yeah, well, I'll see you at the next break, man. I got to get back on."

by Burton Bernstein

MELVIN SOKOLSKY

Conversation #7567:

"All you gotta do is push the little button on the floor with your foot while you're driving along and the pointer on the dial—you know, the red needle—moves up to the next station."

"How do you like that."

"I'm telling you, when you gotta do as much driving as I gotta do for my work, it's a godsend. A godsend! All you gotta do is tap the little button with your foot and—*zip!*—you got yourself another station, just like magic."

"What do you make of that."

"I'll tell you another thing. A radio in the car for me is manna from heaven, the way I gotta drive all over. It keeps me company, like a friend to talk to on a long trip. I'm as comfortable like I'm sitting here with you in this restaurant."

"I know what you mean. It's exactly the same with me, only I don't care for all those rock and rolls they play nowadays on the stations. They drive me crazy on a long trip with all that commotion and noise. Maybe it's all right for the kids, but it drives me personally crazy."

"You wanna know what I do about rock and roll? I push the little button with my foot until I get one of those classic stations. Nowadays, they got classic stations where they play beautiful slow music. All I gotta do is push the little button on the floor with my foot and sit back and drive and I'm listening to beautiful classic music. The hours fly by like a flash."

"Well, to tell you the truth, I'm not so crazy either about those classic stations. I'll tell you what I like: I like what you call chamber music—you know, with a hundred violins sounding like they're playing in a big bowling alley or someplace. That's the kind of music I go for, whether I'm driving or sitting by myself at home."

"So don't you think you can't push the little button and get a chamber music station, too? They got chamber stations just like they got classic stations. I'm telling you, get yourself one of these radios with the button on the floor and you can get whatever you want to get. You don't like what you get, all you gotta do is push the little button on the floor with your foot and you get something you want. *Zip!*—easy as jumping on a log."

"How do you like that. What'll they think of next?"

5

Romans launch new performing art when they stage spectacular water ballet at Caesarea. 10 B.C.

6

The curtain goes up on the first play acted by professionals in the Colonies when "The Recruiting Officer" opens in New York. 1732

7

The Covent Garden Theater opens. 1732

9

From Harry Truman's diary: "Margie held a concert in D.C. . . . It was a good one. . . . A frustrated critic . . . wrote a lousy review. It upset me and I wrote him what I thought of him!" 1950

10

In Waco, Texas, Harry L. Washburn gets life imprisonment for murdering his mother-in-law, while a TV audience—for the first time—tunes in on a court's verdict. 1955.

12

Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., dies at fifty-six. 1939

13

Marilyn Monroe bids $1,335 for a collection of 178 play and movie scripts annotated by Max Reinhardt, beating all competition, including the University of Southern California. 1952

17

Thespis wins a goat as the first prize in a song-and-dance contest in Athens. 534 B.C.

18

Janitors of the Paris Opéra-Comique threaten to quit over the new production of "Lakmé" when director Jean-Jacques Brothier insists that they shower the stage with two hundred pounds of dead leaves, then sweep them up and rebag them for the next performance. 1960

19

The Czech Army newspaper's list of recommended recordings for Christmas includes "Son of an Automatic Rifle" and "A Million Arms." 1954

22

The Windsor Hills public school in Baltimore presents its annual Christmas pageant, using musical accompaniment for the first time and starring Leland Miles, Alvin Berman, and the Sagner cousins, Joan and Gloria. 1935

25

Arturo Toscanini returns to America to conduct the newly formed NBC Symphony Orchestra as twenty million radio listeners hear his initial broadcast. 1937

31

General merriment. December, *quoque anno.*

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
DECEMBER					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

A room in the palace at Rome belonging to Acte's suite. GALBA *walks up and down before a table piled with scrolls, at which sits* EIRON, *with a stylus, looking up at him.*

EIRON: They are getting angry and impatient.
GALBA: Can you blame them? Look how the work is piling up,
And can I get her to issue orders or take an interest?
No. For months now nothing but irresolution, inaction —
EIRON: I don't envy you.
GALBA: Who started all this business about new armies, new revolts?
Now you'd think she had let the whole matter drop.
No, I shall have to call her to order, I can see it.

(Enter ACTE *and* MYRKO *the dwarf.)*

I shall have to risk her displeasure once again.
Ach! Women playing at politics!
ACTE: That sounds ominous, Galba! Risk my displeasure, would you?
GALBA: Alas! I shall have to tell you some home truths, my dear.
The work piles up, the decisions are impending. . . .
What am I to do? Work and pleasure do not mix, my dear.
ACTE: What pleasure do I have among these insolent and haughty
Romans? Nothing but snobs and slights. Their manners and
Their morals both are something to disgust one; and I am the
Barbarian, if you please.
GALBA: We are talking at cross purposes. I spoke of work.
ACTE: You spoke of pleasures; the pleasure of captivity.
I will forgive you; you are doing duty for my absent father.

(She seats herself and throws a ball for MYRKO, *which he catches in a cup and hands back to her.* GALBA *watches with disapproval. He speaks to* EIRON.*)*

GALBA: Copy out the revisions and attach them.

*(*GALBA *gestures to him to leave. Exit* EIRON.*)*

ACTE: Myrko has found his wits but lost his voice.
Isn't that strange? You can see from his eyes
He understands everything. Here, Myrko, come here.
Why won't you speak, eh? Not even to your mistress?

*(*MYRKO *hangs his head shyly like a child and shakes it.)*

I know; you want to go and play with your new friend,
The little son of Fabius, is that it?

*(*MYRKO *nods.)*

Go on with you, then.

*(*MYRKO *goes slowly off.)*

Galba, do you know my sight is slowly coming back?
GALBA: Yes, my dear.
ACTE: I can see quite a lot now — not letters, of course.
But I haven't told a soul of it — except one person.
Ah! but you know. Now then, what is it?
I see you shuffling scrolls and looking grim.
GALBA: They are pressing us very hard; the new armies are ready.
The young generals are impatient for action.
Everything turns on the second half of the plan —
To escape from Rome and join them. They want to know when.
ACTE: They must wait until I am ready.
GALBA: It is easy to say, but suppose the revolt broke loose
While we are here in Rome? You know the fate of hostages?
ACTE: Amar would never let it break loose.
O this revolt! They spoke of years of preparation,
To make quite sure this time. Now my head is full of plans.
GALBA: You are having doubts?
ACTE: No. I have been studying the politics of Rome a little,
Looking at Scythia from the outside, so to speak.
You were right: things look quite different from here.
I am beginning to realize what forces move us.
I need time to reflect, to think, Galba. We must make
No mistake this time when we strike.
GALBA: Is this truthful; or is it that you cannot tear yourself
Away from Rome and the thought that Fabius might —
ACTE: How dare you!
GALBA: Here comes the displeasure.
ACTE: You are unjust to me; simply because you are in my confidence,
Because I cannot read these letters for myself.
GALBA: It is you who are unjust to your servants.
ACTE: Am I?
GALBA: Very. And now we speak of it, here is another.
A secret letter under seal from Gaul.

*(*ACTE *leaps up.)*

ACTE: Fabius! Is it Fabius?
GALBA: Yes.
ACTE: Are we alone? Read it to me, Galba, slowly,
Slowly, like a death sentence.
GALBA: *(Reading)*

"Beloved lady, may these words find you well and happy
Though far from one who loves you."
ACTE: Ah, do not read it with such distaste, Galba.
GALBA: I am sorry.
ACTE: It is not a dispatch, after all.
GALBA: He says you met last in the Imperial Garden. Did you?
ACTE: Yes.
GALBA: That was appallingly rash.
ACTE: Yes, love is rash, love is blind. It was the only place.
I knew every statue there by touch. Read, Galba, read.

(As GALBA *reads, a screen opens, showing, against a transparency, a garden full of statues; the silhouette of* FABIUS *walks, with arms outstretched, as if blind, among them, hunting for her.)*

GALBA: "So dangerous a meeting place and yet the perfect one.
No, I had not intended to see you again; our resolutions
Were unimpeachable. By meeting again we failed ourselves,
And so discovered one another. How fascinating the sadness
Of the nightingales, purity of darkness, the fountains
Playing in warm air."

*(*ACTE *walks to the corner of the stage and turns to gaze at the garden.)*

ACTE: So it was. It was a fatality, like all such meetings.
I stood on an empty pedestal to wait.
GALBA: *(Reading)*

"High summer in Rome, scent of the parched earth
Like our bodies; a bed of cool marble, a cloudless sky.
And to hunt for you there, a marble echo,
Disguised among the statues, the hard white foam of stone,
Perfected in the silence of human things
By prayer and sacrifice, bodies purged of time."

(As GALBA *reads, the silhouette figure of* FABIUS *searches among the statues; at last one raises its hand. He kisses the hen of her robe and helps her down. They embrace and move away back, fading slowly.* ACTE, *watching the shadows from the front of the stage, puts up her hand as if to stop them and then advances and enters the gauze and appears among the garden statues. She holds out her hand, and the silhouette of* FABIUS *enters to take it. Embracing once more, he leads her to a marble bench. The light comes up warmly so that they are no longer shadows but themselves.)*

ACTE: I have been standing quite still for a whole hour.
FABIUS: I thought you were a Diana.
ACTE: I was. Diana, listening to the night music of Rome.
I did not think you would come.
FABIUS: Have you changed? Has anything changed?
ACTE: Feel how my heart beats.
FABIUS: I did not mean to come myself; and then I decided
To come, if only to say good-bye.
ACTE: I have been saying farewell to you in my mind,
Over and over again, for months past.
It has become mixed with my heartbeats now.
And still I am too weak . . .
FABIUS: Why should this happen to us?
ACTE: Do not ask me, tell me why; you should know.
You are the strong one, Fabius. I am the captive, the hostage.
FABIUS: Or else it should have been in other circumstances.
ACTE: It could not be otherwise; it was waiting for us.
FABIUS: Yes, somewhere else, far away from Rome
With its dangers and intrigues and follies.
We should have gone away together from the very first.
ACTE: We could not; we have parts to play in the world.
FABIUS: And now I am trapped; we are both trapped,
Like sparrows on a limed twig.
ACTE: Do you regret it?
FABIUS: No, but I should; if I really loved you, I should.
Even as it is, we may not meet again for years.
Do you hear me, years!
ACTE: Years! Yes, I hear you. It will change nothing.
FABIUS: O it is unjust, unjust; we were born to be happy together.
Could you break free of me now?
ACTE: No. You will always be there now. Sometimes I curse you
In my own mind. Believe me, I have tried everything.
But now you are here, I know it is all useless.
I am happy, Fabius, and I feel like a criminal.
FABIUS: And yet I am glad at the same time that you cannot.

ACTE: All this happiness seems unearned, a legacy from the world.
FABIUS: Hush.

(A faint silhouette crosses back among the statues. It is that of MYRKO *the dwarf.* FABIUS *takes her by the arms and draws her away among the statues. As they fade,* ACTE *reappears on the forestage in the lights, where* GALBA *is still reading. The garden fades and dies away.)*

GALBA: "So it will go on until perhaps the mind and heart
Wear out the problem, gnaw it into pieces;
Or until the words themselves become meaningless,
And love like a lost language in a forgotten script."
That is how it ends.
ACTE: Ah, Galba, do not grudge it to me.
GALBA: It was not that at all; I did not speak of this.
*(*ACTE *is suddenly angry.)*
ACTE: But you hate it, don't you? You simply hate it.
I can tell by your voice; you find it all
Insufferably banal and insipid and disgraceful —
GALBA: Please.
ACTE: Give me the letter. I know! You are saying to yourself:
"These old maids, when they fall in love,
Behave like double virgins" — the Roman proverb.
I can see it on your face, hear it in your voice.
You are thinking: "This ill becomes a Princess
With political charges on her to family and country."
GALBA: Yes, you are right. That is it exactly.
You have every right to love, but not to lose your wits
Over an intrigue which can come to nothing.
ACTE: I have not lost my wits. I can prove it.
I *have* been planning, along lines far more ambitious
Than you could ever guess, Galba.
Scythia has always been present in my mind.
GALBA: Madam, I am your servant. I initiate nothing.
I execute such orders as you give me.
ACTE: There are times when I could pull your hair.
You are just like my father, only worse.
Listen to me now and you will judge
If I have been wasting my time in idle dreams.
In your last dispatch you hinted that Rome
Is on the brink of great changes; you said,
"Great dangers impend." . . . Did you really think so?
GALBA: Yes, I did and I do. I know my Rome of old.
ACTE: What do you foresee?
GALBA: In fact, in detail, nothing as yet.
ACTE: Danger for whom?
GALBA: For the gentleman we call X.
ACTE: Nero!
GALBA: Hush! Yes, the tide is rising fast around him.
These senseless, meaningless butcheries can't go on.
Suspense is in the very air we breathe.
ACTE: His murder or deposition would be a popular move?
GALBA: Where does this lead?
ACTE: You will see.
GALBA: Of course it would! How many senators have been murdered,
Their wives and children spitted like larks?
Yet they all seem in the grip of a terrible paralysis.
If you could see, I would lead you to that window
And ask you to look down into the Imperial Garden.
Tonight there is a new fancy: the walks are lit by —
Guess. Human torches, Christian children,
Their bodies soaked in pitch and set alight
Like human lamps to light the supper he is giving Sporus.
Varrus was murdered this afternoon because he played
The lyre rather too well. Ach! but why go on?
ACTE: Very well; here I want to ask you something.
If *it* happened, suppose someone plucked up courage . . .
GALBA: Well?
ACTE: Would not Fabius come to power by the very course of things?
GALBA: Fabius!
ACTE: The Army would bring him in. Who is more popular?
GALBA: Nothing could be less certain, though of course
Anything is possible. You could not count on it.
There are several armies and several generals,
All more ambitious than he is. No, this is
Not thinking, it is daydreaming, Scythian thinking!
ACTE: Such an act might well help him to power.
GALBA: Might is a long word with many echoes.
ACTE: Let us suppose —
GALBA: Are you thinking of Fabius as Emperor?
It is beyond his scope; he's a soldier to the core,
Despising politics. What would he do here at court?
Honestly, I cannot follow you. It's inconceivable.
It is mad, mad.
ACTE: But if there were an Emperor who loved and understood
Scythia and her hopes, it might avert useless bloodshed,
Another revolt might become unnecessary.
GALBA: You take my breath away. Are you perhaps imagining
A Scythian Empress for the Romans? In raising Fabius,
You would have to put down Flavia, his wife,
And dispossess his son—
ACTE: Never. By the Gods, never! You misjudge my motive, Galba.
Flavia would reign with him, his son succeed him.
GALBA: How feminine! Do you think she will continue to be deceived
Forever about yourself and Fabius? And then,
What would you do here?
ACTE: He would send me back to my father. We might make
A treaty which was more than empty promises.
GALBA: What do you wish me to say? I shall risk your
Disapprobation once more. Yes, it is all very pretty!
But it has the typical Scythian touch of
Hopeless impracticality. *How* could it be done?
There are a hundred senators who would love to know.
The man is surrounded night and day by guards,
Food tasters hanging at his lips like leeches.
Mr. X may be mad, but he is far from foolish.
ACTE: He is completely in my power.
GALBA: What?
ACTE: Yes, I am not joking. You look startled.

*(*ACTE *laughs.)*

GALBA: My dear child, I —
ACTE: Shall I tell you how? By the strangest chance.
GALBA: Not so loud.
ACTE: There is no one here. You know the old kitchens
That lie under the royal apartments? Myrko found them,
And led me there. No one uses them now. They are
Deserted. I sit there in the winter. They are warm.
They smell of apples.
GALBA: Well. Well. Yes. Yes.
ACTE: The Emperor began to visit me there alone,
Last winter; there is an unguarded staircase to his rooms.
GALBA: Never. And alone, quite alone?
ACTE: Yes. He cannot sleep. He has terrible dreams.
He heard me singing once and came to see who it was.
He is like a child, Galba—he enjoys escaping
From the guard. We meet in secret; he is always alone.
Guess what? I make him soup!

(She laughs.)

GALBA: How can I believe such a thing?
ACTE: He is good company sometimes, do you know?
He is mad, yes, but not always bad. I have grown
Quite fond of him. In Scythia we should turn him loose
In the village with a tin whistle and a tambourine.
He would be sacred to us, a laughter-bringer.
GALBA: We have heard no laughter since we came here,
Nor are we likely to. But *really* alone?
ACTE: Really alone.
GALBA: Gods!
ACTE: Now do you see which way my thoughts are tending?
And here I need your judgment, your mature judgment.
GALBA: I am out of my depth. My blood runs cold with fear.
ACTE: Mine is warm. If such a deed could be of help to us,
If it could bring Fabius to power —
GALBA: No. No. It is too much to consider. Acte, you are mad!
This is harebrained; forget it, forget it.
Besides, I am sure you are mistaken; he is watched.
Somebody must know he is there with you.
ACTE: No. I am sure.
GALBA: How can you be unless you see clearly?
ACTE: He tells me so; he revels in the fact.
GALBA: It's a trap; be warned, my dear, it's a trap.
ACTE: That is why I came to tell you of it; you must come
And see with your own eyes if I am right or not.
There is no haste. We have time to consider everything.
GALBA: No good will come of this. Forget the thought.
ACTE: Now who is irresolute? No, I insist. It is an order.
It is your duty to verify my statements
And advise me; you have accused me of inaction,
Of lack of thought and irresponsibility toward Scythia.
Here is my answer. You want a plan: I have one.
GALBA: I will never let you do it.
ACTE: Very well. But first you must come and see,
Come and see for yourself, Galba.
GALBA: When?
ACTE: At the next full moon; I can always be sure of a visitation
About that time. In three days time, Galba.
GALBA: But, Princess —
ACTE: You will do as you are told. Do you hear?

SCENE TWO

A room in the house of Fabius at Rome; his wife, FLAVIA, *is present, talking to* PETRONIUS

ARBITER, *her uncle and Nero's close friend, who sits fanning himself. He is fat and ironical, his gray hair cropped short; an absolute cathedral of a man with a coarse voice — more like a groom than a poet.*

PETRONIUS: Very well! I'll answer! But first of all, dear Flavia,
I want my sherbet. This heat is killing me.
Tester! Tester!

(His BODY SERVANT *comes on with a drink for him.)*

FLAVIA: Forgive me, Uncle. I got so absorbed
It made me forget my manners.
PETRONIUS: Bravo, Tester! The ideal servant anticipates, eh?
TESTER: If possible, sir.

(Exit TESTER, *the servant.)*

PETRONIUS: Now then, what is it?
FLAVIA: I thought you would know about this recall of Fabius.
I must write to him tonight.
PETRONIUS: It's common knowledge, my dove.
FLAVIA: But is it really for a triumph or . . . there are rumors;
One can be sure of nothing these days.
He's not in bad odor with the Emperor?
PETRONIUS: Not as far as I know; at least Nero spoke of a triumph,
And a well-merited one, after the last great victory!
Now of course, with Nero these days one can't be sure;
He's changeable and moody, as you know . . .
FLAVIA: Fabius is uneasy; he sent a messenger to me.
I wanted to know what to reply to him —
PETRONIUS: As a matter of principle, put as little as possible
Down in writing; it's a golden rule with me.
One never knows.
FLAVIA: Perhaps not.
PETRONIUS: Certainly not; tell him all goes well here,
As well as can be expected —
FLAVIA: A characteristic irony. I have begun to distrust everything,
Even fate, Uncle; Gods, what times we live in —
What is to become of us all and our children?
PETRONIUS: Hum. You are young, my dove, and the world looks black.
It did to me, when I was young. Black, black.
FLAVIA: How do you stay so calm, so unmoved by things?
After all, you are in greater danger than anyone.
PETRONIUS: I've got used to it; I have been in mortal danger
Ever since Nero started to admire me ten years ago!
FLAVIA: Ten years!
PETRONIUS: Thereabouts! My secret is an immortal laziness;
It's a knack I picked up in Athens long ago,
When I was initiated there. Don't smile.
FLAVIA: You jest, as always, Uncle.
PETRONIUS: Well, not really: half and half. I am writing
A book of moral recipes now called "How to
Live Posthumously and Die Calmly." A comic book.
Yes, my life has been largely a posthumous one in Rome.
By the way, this is rotten sherbet.
In future I'll have to bring my own.
I must go, my dove; I have friends waiting at the baths.
FLAVIA: So there is nothing special for Fabius?
PETRONIUS: Tell him not to be a fool, from me.
FLAVIA: I know what you are thinking of — Acte!
PETRONIUS: Hum! A taste in foreign princesses has always been
Inexplicable to me, like a taste for artichokes;
They are unpalatable, these foreigners — crude,
Lacking sophistication and judgment. Pretty fools.
And once they come to Rome they disintegrate: addle like eggs.
She is out of her depth and he is out of his mind.
But she's pretty and plays chess well . . .
Be patient, Flavia. It will pass like the summer!
FLAVIA: Fear nothing. I'm watching every move. Every move, Uncle.
PETRONIUS: And no rashness, please.
FLAVIA: No. The viper only strikes when it is trodden on.
Otherwise it is a peaceable creature. Good-bye.
PETRONIUS: Good-bye.

(Exit PETRONIUS. FLAVIA *ponders for a moment, and then crosses the room to gaze into the garden. She claps her hands and calls out.)*

FLAVIA: Nurse!

(Enter NURSE.)

It's time the child came in; he is playing out there
With Myrko, in the garden. Go and fetch him in,
And send me the dwarf, will you?

NURSE: Yes, madam.

*(*FLAVIA *sits down and opens a silver box of sweets. Exit* NURSE. *Enter* MYRKO, *hesitantly.)*

FLAVIA: Ah, Myrko. Good evening, my little jester.
Won't you say good evening to me at least?
No! Well, I know how to loosen your tongue.
Here, come here!

(She puts a sweet in MYRKO's *mouth.)*

Isn't it so?
MYRKO: Yes, lady.
FLAVIA: Isn't it so? Have another; tell me what you know.
About the child, for example.
MYRKO: I told you. She has got rid of it. It's gone.
FLAVIA: You are sure?
MYRKO: Quite sure, lady.
FLAVIA: Thank the Gods! I feared I would have to act.
What else, Myrko. Yes, take one if you wish.
MYRKO: Nothing more. Yes, a plot against the Emperor.
FLAVIA: Acte?
MYRKO: Yes, lady.
FLAVIA: How? When? Where?
MYRKO: I do not know. I heard them talking.
FLAVIA: I wonder what that stupid fool can be hatching;
She'll end by bringing us all to discredit and death.
Who is "them"?
MYRKO: Galba; she and Galba; talking, talking, talking.
FLAVIA: I shall go and see him. Here, take the box and go.

(Exit MYRKO. FLAVIA *takes a turn up and down and then claps her hands. Enter a* SERVANT.)

Tell the slaves I am going out into the town.
SERVANT: Yes, madam.

(Exit SERVANT.)

SCENE THREE

The cavernous kitchens in a disused part of the palace; a fire burns in the hearth. A few sketchy kitchen utensils stand or hang about. A long table center has some scrolls and some dressmaking materials lying about on it. In a corner stand a lyre and a hand loom. An arched door, back, gives onto a garden. There is the noise of rain and wind and the flicker of summer lightning. Enter ACTE, *leading* GALBA, *who holds candles.*

ACTE: Here is the place.
GALBA: Brrr . . . It's gloomy; let's have some light.

(He lights more candles.)

ACTE: They say it looks desolate and decayed. Does it?
GALBA: An old barrack of a place. Horrible.
ACTE: Anyway, here I sit and weave or listen to music.
It smells like the kitchen at home. Can you see
Somewhere you might hide? There are hangings, aren't there?
GALBA: Wait. Let me have a look around. Yes, here's a hanging.
ACTE: I can't promise he will come; but it is about the hour.
From those stairs, up there. They lead directly to his bedroom.
GALBA: I see nothing. They are dark.
ACTE: Be patient a moment. You hear his footfall quite distinctly.
GALBA: Shh . . . what was that?
ACTE: Only the rain, or the owls.
GALBA: No. I thought I heard . . . Did you not?
ACTE: It is full of noises, this place. We will need patience.
Poor Galba. I am always making demands on you.
You will be tired out. But it is worth trying.
I would like you to see how he is when we're alone together.
Don't be afraid.
GALBA: Well, to business: I'll hide behind this.

*(*GALBA *hides.* ACTE *feels about, to reassure herself about the kitchenware, and lifts a pot onto the fire, smelling it. Then she seats herself at the lyre, playing and reciting as the lights dim away.)*

ACTE: Galba, do you remember this?
"Content is careless as a love child is,
She will or will not as the spirit barbs her
Dive like dove or hover like a hare,
Here, there, gone, nowhere, everywhere.

"You will never find her,
Catch her, hold her, bind her long,
Yet she lives a heartbeat in the echo
Of my song."
It's from your part of the country, Galba.
I expect you've forgotten it. You've lived too long abroad!
GALBA: Shh!
ACTE: "Knock on closed hearts, whisper at locked casements,

Hunt her in dark woods printed by the moon,
In the heart's footfalls or kisses made of air,
Content is here, there, gone, nowhere, everywhere.

"You will never find her,
Catch her, hold her, bind her long,
Yet she lives a heartbeat in the echo
Of my song."

(A shuffle is now heard off and a voice calls "Acte" twice. It has a note of plaintive whining suggesting a sick infant. She takes a candle and crosses to the short staircase, which up to now has been in darkness. Her light dimly illumines a fat and disheveled figure. It is NERO.)

NERO: I heard the music and I could not sleep.
ACTE: Can you see to come down? Did you hear my song?
NERO: Yes. I could not understand the words.
Acte, I am in pain. The music helps me.
ACTE: What have you done to yourself?
NERO: My eye is inflamed again. That sty has come back.
ACTE: Come down. It is warm by the fire. Come on.
NERO: Is it safe? Did you hear the thunder?
I heard all Rome rock in her sleep.
Are you sure?
ACTE: Do as you are told now! I am not going to stand here
All night long.
NERO: Very well.

*(*NERO *comes almost timidly down the stair to take her hand. He is anointing his eye with spittle. He wears a mask pushed onto the back of his head which, when he turns, gives the illusion of a second face which is exactly like his, only a livid and phosphorescent caricature. He has a wreath of flowers round his neck which he picks at from time to time, and he carries a small pair of sandals in his hand.* ACTE *leads him across stage to a chair by the fire.)*

It was so painful all evening; I could not work
On the poem I'm making for Sporus. Listen:
"Thread by thread the Hero unraveled her heart,
Step by step he walked into her mind,
Kiss by kiss he spent and killed her." There!
But it is no good unless the Minotaur is killed —
A live man, his blood will make her black hair sticky!
ACTE: And who will make your music?
NERO: I will. The flutes will go . . .

(He whistles tunelessly.)

Isn't it marvelous? Listen to the rains. The sky is in ruins.
Acte, tonight Sporus mocked me. Poor child. Mocked his God.
We are all lonely people. The kisses and bridal veils —
They join two emptinesses. Don't they?
Don't they, Acte? Don't they? *Answer me!*
ACTE: I suppose.
NERO: You suppose! You know! You know quite well.
There should be no marriages, only burials.
We shall abolish everything soon,
All the faces, the sameness, the disgust.
Burn it all down, I say, and in the cleared space
Build something that a God might recognize . . . Yes!
Vertical, pure, and unequivocally perfect!
See my nice flowers? Smell, take one.
ACTE: Jasmine?
NERO: Since I wear them my mother has gone;
Simon the Magician was right. She always hated
The smell of flowers, my mother, my dead mother.
ACTE: Do not speak of her now.
NERO: More beautiful than she was in life,
Such blackness and vehemence she has now. Aiee!
When I cry "Mother" and fall at her feet to kiss them.
They dissolve into a mist. Something is wrong with me,
With my head. I always see a sow eating its litter,
Gobble, gobble, gobble, no wonder I do not sleep!
ACTE: Speak of something else, I beg you.
NERO: I will. Here are her court shoes.
Look. Such a small foot. In the snow
Her footprints are tiny like mice or birds.
Thank goodness she has gone. What was that?
ACTE: I heard nothing.
NERO: For a whole week now she has spared me.
ACTE: Come, you promised; will you have wine tonight
Or the same Scythian broth my servants make me?
NERO: Aha. The broth, of course; though I'm a God
I'm a creature of habit too. Yes, O yes. Indeed I am.
ACTE: Come to table, then.

(He seats himself in great good humor, rubbing his hands and chuckling. ACTE *lays his place and puts the broth before him with his spoon and a loaf.* NERO *crows delightedly, childlishly.)*

NERO: At once, when you do that, I am back. Yes, back there!
ACTE: In your childhood!
I see fear, deep fear. How you are suffering.
NERO: More, look behind the fear and you will see
The poet I have become, the archpoet of Rome!
When I began to reign, for five whole years
They said Augustus has come down on earth again.
My laws were golden, I dispensed perfect justice,
I spread happiness and security everywhere.
What a pleasure, what an unction I enjoyed,
Watching them fawn and weep and bless me.
I licked the gravy of their praise from lips
Trembling to kiss my sandals and say, "Thank you. Thank you."

(He gives a sharp, barking laugh)

Then one day an idea came like an arrow.
It clove my mind, and so I lost my balance
And began falling backward into black space.
It was a whisper which repeated, "Just suppose
There is no meaning in going on doing good?"
"What!" I cried. "Is nothing watching, then?"
I felt like a sleepwalker on a high tightrope.
If doing good won't perfect life, make life art,
Then where's the point? What had I done all these years?
Nothing! No one had changed. Things went on just as before;
People were just as odious, fawning, stupid.
Man was a slave. Despair struck me, utter despair,
For life must be an art, otherwise it is not life.
Do you see my dilemma? I had exhausted the path of good.
Boredom, *boredom,* that was all it brought.
Men felt no more, learned no more. Some other way
Must be devised. Therefore, after much passionate
Self-communing, I thought out another way
Of fashioning the truth. It was all that was left me!
It cost me such agony to formulate,
You could never measure such pain in words.
Rome pushed me to it. I decided I would build
This other world for Rome or perish in the attempt!

(There is a sudden crash of thunder and a blinding flash of lightning. The candles go out. NERO *leaps up.)*

Acte, where are you? I cannot see you.
I am afraid of the dark. Everything is moving.
Acte, it is my mother. I hear her footsteps.
ACTE: Calm yourself. Sit down. Do as you are told!

*(*NERO *gives a long, sighing moan. Enter the green, phosphorescent ghost of* AGRIPPINA. *It comes down the stairs and stands staring at* NERO, *pointing at him.)*

NERO: Mummy, Mummy, don't point at me like that.
I did not do it. I swear. Mummy.
Don't make me do it again.

(He sinks down on one knee with his arms raised to the ghost and sobs.)

No. No.

(The ghost begins to move slowly toward the garden door.)

She's leaving. Over there.

(He passes suddenly into rage.)

By the black God, this time she won't escape me!
I'll finish her off. I'll strangle her! Mummy!
There is an old well full of leaves in the garden.
She would fall softly as in dreams. O Mummy, listen!
But the leaves would smother her voice forever.
ACTE: Calm yourself.
NERO: Shh! Not a word or she will vanish.
O the long trials of loneliness, the perspectives
Of memory: it rusts slowly, like the sword.
Mummy! It is Rufus, your little son.
Wait for me. You are eating me alive. Wait.

(The GHOST *recedes with deliberate slowness, as if to draw him on;* NERO *follows, pace by pace, shrinking and panting, as if hypnotized. But he picks up the bread knife as he moves past* ACTE, *and so slowly exits.* GALBA *emerges from hiding, shuts the door and bars it. He has an unlit candle in his hand; it trembles as he tries to light it.* ACTE *clasps her hands and stands thinking. There is a peal of thunder.)*

ACTE: Galba!
GALBA: Yes, here!
ACTE: You didn't believe me, did you?

(She laughs softly, speaks almost with elation.)

You see how easy it would be. You thought I was romancing.
GALBA: I am afraid. You must do nothing, do you hear?
ACTE: Of course not; not without consent. I only brought you
To show you that I spoke the truth.
GALBA: We must think. We must get away from this place.
ACTE: Well, then, unlock the door.
GALBA: Why?
ACTE: He will come back; he must, this way.
Or he will tap all night, and call for me.
GALBA: Come, let us get away from this awful place.
ACTE: Let me talk to him some more.
GALBA: No.

(GALBA *blows out the candles and unbars the door; summer lightning still flickers in the garden.)*

Acte, give me your hand. Come. Quickly. Quickly.

SCENE FOUR

The apartments of Acte. ACTE *and her* NURSE. *Enter a* WAITING MAID.

MAID: The lady Flavia is here, madam.
ACTE: Flavia!
MAID: She has something to tell you.
ACTE: Flavia. Why Flavia?
MAID: Shall I tell her you are ill?
ACTE: Why now, at this moment, after so long?
Has Fabius betrayed himself? O luckless that we are.
I cannot see her. Yes, tell her I am ill.
MAID: Very well, my lady.

(MAID *turns to exit.)*

ACTE: Wait. I must. I shall have to see her.
But first come here and look at me carefully.
Is my color high as it should be, my hair tidy?
MAID: My lady is lovely as usual.
ACTE: *(Smacks her face.)*
Very well. So I am looking my best, truthfully? Without flattery?
MAID: Yes, my lady.
ACTE: Fetch me my family jewels and the chair of state. Quickly.

(Exit MAID)

She will find me in a style befitting my rank, at least.
How pitiful are the defenses of a Princess.

(Enter MAID *with jewels and a* SLAVE *with a high-backed chair of state, which he places, bowing as he withdraws.* ACTE *is adorned with the jewels and bracelets.)*

Better and better. Now, am I ready?
MAID: Yes, my lady.
ACTE: Admit the lady, and leave us alone together. See to it!

(Exit MAID. *Enter* FLAVIA.)

FLAVIA: Princess.
ACTE: You are the lady Flavia?

(There is a long silence.)

Why do you look at me so long? I cannot read your expression,
Being a little blind. Have you not seen me before?
FLAVIA: Yes, but never from so close. It was last year.
ACTE: You have the advantage of me. I will never see you clearly.
FLAVIA: I know that. May I . . . may I sit down?
ACTE: It is not customary during an audience.
FLAVIA: I did not ask for an audience.
I had a right to come, and well you know it, Princess.
ACTE: What have you to tell me?
FLAVIA: Much. But there is ground to be cleared.
I hardly know where to begin.
ACTE: You may sit. You are a Roman patrician after all.
FLAVIA: Can you guess why I am here?
ACTE: What has Fabius told you? Is he the reason?
FLAVIA: He could tell me nothing I did not know.
Do you think I have been blind to all that has passed?
Do you think his clumsy maneuvers or yours deceived me?
ACTE: Ah, then you know; truly, I am sorry for it, then.
We did not wish to wound you, neither he nor I.
FLAVIA: Your solicitude is touching. Let me reassure you.
Neither of you could, were it not for my son.
I have never loved Fabius and now I hate him.
ACTE: What brings you to me?
FLAVIA: He sent me. In his disgrace, his nerve has failed him.
He came "running" to me to "confess" himself,
Unaware that I knew all about you both.

(She laughs harshly.)

My laughter seemed to frighten him.
ACTE: It frightens me. What sort of woman are you?
Has Fortune despised you, denying you his love?
FLAVIA: Long years of servitude and self-disgust—
That is what Fabius means to me. My parents
Sold me to him like a mare. He was paid well to take me.
I have shared his honorable bed for years now.
Ashes, madam, ashes. It is what Rome called a perfect match.
ACTE: You have come here to humiliate me.
FLAVIA: No. To tell you certain truths. You are welcome, Princess,
To such a man as he is. Welcome.
ACTE: Shame, Flavia!
FLAVIA: There is no shame in truth. Who are you, anyway, to judge?
ACTE: I have a heart, at least.
FLAVIA: Mine has been turned to stone long since. But how would you,
A wretched foreigner, know anything of
Roman values, Roman styles?
A Scythian *would* admire this type of wooden insect
And mistake it for a man—a Roman trained to duty, bred to duty.
ACTE: Yes! Yes! You cannot take him from me.
FLAVIA: The hero of the national response
Sealed up in duty like a falcon's eye,
To be unbandaged only when the Army
Turns duty into murder. Pew!
Could I grudge you such a man?
And now with the first reverse of fortune
There comes the baby in armor, tears, self-reproaches.
ACTE: Never Fabius!
FLAVIA: He sent me, madam.
ACTE: You have never really known him.
Ah—that would give our love a point, a justification!
The man you speak of I have never seen.
FLAVIA: We see what the mirror will allow us; even if you
Had your full sight, you would see nothing but
The distorted fictions bred of empty passion.
ACTE: How could you bear to come to me, knowing all this?
FLAVIA: I tell you he was too cowardly to come himself.
He knew that for the child I would humiliate myself.
The child! You have never been a mother, Princess.
It is for him I came, to protect my son, my only son.
ACTE: How can I help?
FLAVIA: Fabius wants the letters he has written to you.
They alone will satisfy the guardians.
He has already delivered your own to them.
ACTE: He gave up my letters?
FLAVIA: Of course. To prove his innocence of any conspiracy.
They are harmless vaporings—but what of his own?
ACTE: Flavia, they are gone. I have destroyed them. He asked me to.
FLAVIA: O wicked, selfish, empty woman—
ACTE: No! It was to protect you that I obeyed him.
FLAVIA: Protect me?
ACTE: My every thought was for his advancement.
And for yours: you will not believe me.
FLAVIA: Advancement! You have nearly destroyed us both.
ACTE: Do not be bitter because he never loved you.
FLAVIA: Ah, but he does, he did, he always has, Princess.
He found a kind of sensual pleasure in my own disgust.
My frigidity excited him like a whip.
ACTE: Please.
FLAVIA: You know little of men; there is more than one kind of love.
I served his lust in silence and indifference when he was drunk.
ACTE: This is what I so hate in Roman women, this cynicism.
FLAVIA: It comes of seeing truth clearly, Princess.
ACTE: Truth! But he has been true to me, at least, and I
To him—and through him to you, Flavia.
Wait! I was with child by him once.
FLAVIA: I know. You put it away.
ACTE: *Why* did I? *Why* did I do that?
FLAVIA: How should I know? You were too lazy to make a mother.
ACTE: I was protecting your life with Fabius, your son and heir.
FLAVIA: A commendable sophistry for a woman in love!
ACTE: I never wished to steal him from you, never as a husband.
FLAVIA: Self-deceit; you never stopped to think of me.
ACTE: You have never lived—how can I speak to you?
We were trapped, Flavia.
FLAVIA: I must take lessons in living from you?
ACTE: I was never your enemy, but you are mine.
FLAVIA: Yes, and Fabius' enemy. If only we had no child.
That is what has killed us.
ACTE: I imagined you so differently, spent so much time
Thinking how not to hurt you. Fool!
FLAVIA: Yes, you are a fool. If you had really had our lives
At heart, would you, for example, have hatched so mad a scheme

As to poison the Emperor? That was for us, was it not?

ACTE: Galba has been talking to you!

FLAVIA: Yes.

ACTE: But why should he do that? How unlike him.

FLAVIA: I threatened him, madam, with exposure.
He was afraid, afraid of your impulsiveness,
Your lack of sense. He knows my uncle is Petronius Arbiter,
The only man who still can influence Nero,
The only man who might persuade him not to roam at night,
Without telling him the reason. Galba knows you all too well!

ACTE: Galba has never trusted me. I promised him not to do anything.

FLAVIA: Evidently he did not trust you. And another thing:
Suppose I had told Fabius your idea . . . do you know *what*
He would have done—but instantly? No, you don't!
Your Roman lover would have denounced you to the guardians.

ACTE: Denounced me?

FLAVIA: Without a thought. It would be his duty to do so.

ACTE: To denounce me?

FLAVIA: You do not know your Romans yet, madam.
And then—what of me? Suppose your mad scheme
Had succeeded; did you see me on the throne against my will?
Or did you perhaps imagine *yourself* beside him,
A royal consort from the Scythian marshes?

ACTE: Never!

FLAVIA: You wanted me crowned the queen of Fabius!
You did not stop to consider the matter at all.

ACTE: I would not have changed the sovereignty of Scythia
Against a hundred Romes; can't you see that?

FLAVIA: And here we are now, suddenly disgraced by a fiction;
And you have destroyed the proofs of our innocence.
What is to come of it?

ACTE: I shall go to the Emperor and sue. He will hear me.

FLAVIA: This time you will do nothing, if you care for the head
Of your Roman lover; nothing, do you hear?
You have done enough already. The only hope now lies
In my uncle, Petronius. He may avert the worst.

(FLAVIA *gets up and walks about, thinking.*)

The Gods alone know why I should be assailed like this,
And my child's life imperiled by you.
After so many years of patient slavery, too,
By a Scythian vampire! A Scythian harlot!

(Laying hold of her arm)

ACTE: Enough! do you hear me. By the Gods,
If you address me like that I'll call my slaves
And have you whipped, patrician though you are.

FLAVIA: Call them! Call them.

(Enter SOLDIERS *with torches,* GALBA, EIRON, NURSE, MAID.*)*

ACTE: Who is it, Galba?

GALBA: Yes, Princess.

*(*GALBA *advances slowly and takes her hands in silence.)*

ACTE: How often have I said I will not tolerate intrusions
When I am— what is it? Galba! What is it?
Your hands are trembling . . .

(She peers at him and then begins to suspect the truth.)

It's Scythia, isn't it? Isn't it? Something about—

GALBA: Yes, Scythia, Acte. The rumor that we heard is true.
Your father is dead and Scythia has revolted under Amar.

(She sits down in her chair of state, crushed by the news.)

ACTE: Without a word of warning.

GALBA: The messenger was delayed. The usual mismanagement.
Now it is too late; we are all hostages.
The palace guard is with me here to take us.

*(*FLAVIA *has been looking on triumphantly. She makes as if to leave, but* GALBA *stays her with a gesture.)*

FLAVIA: Well, I must take my leave, Princess.

GALBA: Madam, there is also news for you which must be
Faced somehow, calmly faced; the little son of Fabius
Has been taken to be questioned by the watch.
Myrko the dwarf is with him. I—

ACTE: Ah! Flavia. Flavia.

FLAVIA: My son. My son.

*(*FLAVIA *suddenly begins to howl like a professional keener, beating her breast as she sinks to her knees.)*

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

A corner of the Imperial Garden with statuary and a full moon; PETRONIUS ARBITER *is seated on a marble chair before a glass of wine and a great bowl of flowers. Noise of laughter from a banquet off.* NERO's *voice calling.*

NERO: Arbiter! Arbiter! Where can he have gone to?

*(*PETRONIUS ARBITER *growls and, drinking, shakes his head. Enter* NERO *with* SPORUS *grotesquely rouged and clad as a girl. His tunic has bells on it.)*

Ah, there you are! I knew it, my Arbiter.
Always trying to escape and hide yourself.

PETRONIUS: Always looking for fresh air. The smoke tires my eyes.

NERO: How can you bear to be alone? I cannot.
Didn't you enjoy the music and the doves?
Sporus, come and sit down by us, here.
Poor darling, he's half asleep. Why did you leave?

PETRONIUS: I got bored, my duck, I got bored.

NERO: You should never say that, Arbiter.
You know it gives me grave displeasure.
You've been consistently rude this evening.
What did you mean by saying that Nero
Was losing his touch, eh? What did you mean?

PETRONIUS: I meant that Nero was losing his touch.

NERO: It's a rather dangerous way to talk to your Emperor.
I should say it was rather dangerous.

PETRONIUS: When I talk to the Emperor, I use the prescribed forms.
When I talk to a fellow artist, my duck,
I speak as artist to artist—d'you take my meaning?

NERO: So I am losing my touch?

PETRONIUS: You heard me once, you heard me twice.
Sporus, what did I say, eh?

*(*SPORUS *giggles foolishly.)*

SPORUS: Eh?

NERO: But *how?* You must explain that, at least. How am I?

*(*PETRONIUS *sighs.)*

PETRONIUS: Well, when I heard you discussing yet another
Circus act with these prisoners, I got bored, *bored.*
Surely you owe us something more original?
But gladiators, lions, wild horses—it's so stale.
Besides, now you have such rich excuses—
A blind Queen who must die as a hostage,
And then your best general convicted of treachery!
Lovely material for an artist to work on. Lovely!
And all you can think of is to have them both
Publicly impaled or chewed by mangy lions. Ach!
With your views on art, it's preposterous, preposterous!

NERO: But with Scythia in revolt, what am I to do?
Sit still and punish no one? I have both culprits
In my hands. Fabius clearly did not do the job last time,
And as for Acte—you know the story; you say ach!
And how disgusting all this foolish love nonsense
That Fabius uses as a pretext, as an excuse.
No, no. It is a serious matter calling for reprisals.
What would you have me do? You tell me that!

PETRONIUS: Something original; in keeping with your genius, my duck.

NERO: But what?

PETRONIUS: It is not for me to say; I am a writer.
We meddle with life from odd angles.
(He drinks noisily.)

NERO: But I count on you, Arbiter. I must know.
As the writer of a story, how would you . . . As a writer . . .

PETRONIUS: If you are going to revise life as you wish,
You must take the artist's way with it.
Why, it's a pure waste of a blind Queen,
It's a waste of a general of genius. A waste!
Besides if they are in love, that is another very
Important factor. Lovers have every right
To meet in a death embrace; to satisfy art, my duck,
Life must be satisfied first. But you know that.
So . . . you are losing your touch. Definitely. Definitely.

NERO: You really think?

PETRONIUS: It's evident.

NERO: But that is very serious.

PETRONIUS: Indeed it is. Very serious.

NERO: But I insist you tell me what you would do.

PETRONIUS: I am only a writer; but I know that the artist
Must use life with respect. Life demands that we take people
From their heroic side; what need is there to kill people
Who were born to kill each other? It's waste, waste.

NERO: Go on. Go on.

PETRONIUS: It would be more subtle to let them both . . . well . . .
Tempt their own fate, particularly if they are lovers.
Nothing more thorny, nothing more dangerous than love!

It rots the brain and blinds the inner eye.
One takes up heroic positions, strikes attitudes,
Confuses truth and expediency; one suffers.
And in the end one pays for it to the dagger's hilt,
To the cup's dregs; O yes, you can't escape the laws.
A Roman general and a blind Queen—
It could be nothing less than death for them.
As a writer, I know it. But how much better
Death in each other's arms than in the circus!
They would triumph over you and your lions that way!
It's crude, my duck, crude. Downright damned crude.

NERO: Really, you begin to annoy me, Arbiter.

PETRONIUS: Listen, great artist; such people as your captives
Are so deliciously full of absolutes that it's a crime
To waste them on lions; they are simply aching
To die in the name of love or honor. Push the level!
Throw them to destiny, but not to the gladiators.
And watch the fun, artist, watch the fun. Watch it!
That would be my way if I were writing them.

NERO: Yes, but *practically*, how? If they were characters
In a book, a work of art, not in life? I mean—

PETRONIUS: How elegantly one could assist them to tempt their fate!
I should let Acte escape to Scythia. Oh, yes, I would.
I should send her lover back to conquer it again.

NERO: But he could betray me again.

PETRONIUS: You hold his son, remember; you could name your terms.
Promise to restore him to favor on the sole condition
That Acte herself does not survive the campaign.
Have some wine, my duck, have some wine.

NERO: Do you know, I am beginning to see what you mean . . .

PETRONIUS: We want reality as she is; we want her in the nude.
No meddlesome short cuts hastily invented on the spur
By moribund senators with jaded appetites.

NERO: Yes, the artist's truth in life. I begin to see.

PETRONIUS: Well, here it is, then. We artists should be helping life
To live out and realize its own pattern. Only if life
Is served is art served. Do you take me, my duck?
The order of life is divine, as you are yourself.

NERO: You are a marvel, Arbiter.

PETRONIUS: I write books, that is all; but when they are
Good books it is because they follow the outlines
Traced by life itself, of the complex truth of reality.
Of course, you could kill your characters on the first
Page and finish with them; but where's the book then?
Where's your art, my duck? Where's your bloody art?

NERO: But this way anything might happen: anything at all.

PETRONIUS: All the better; people cannot escape the debt
They owe to life; somehow it will get paid.
What the artist needs is patience and curiosity.
You must never be hasty, my duck. One slip of the chisel
And your statue is spoiled for good.

NERO: You think Fabius would obey me?

PETRONIUS: I think; but we won't know until we write the story.
It might be more interesting another way. After all,
There is free will—they might do something different.

NERO: What?

PETRONIUS: Life is various, lovers are unpredictable.
She might renounce Scythia for him. She could.
He might renounce his son for her. He could.
But either way the artist's purpose is served by life.
This tissue of probabilities we will never decipher
Until the past holds them firmly in its grasp.
The past! Dead certainty, we call it. History!

NERO: I believe you are right; we owe it to ourselves
To do something like that with them. Yes!
What my plan lacked was a sort of expiation.

PETRONIUS: Implicit in them, though: not only in *you*.

NERO: Yes. I wish I could plan like you can, Arbiter!
I'll tell you what. I'll strike a bargain with you.
You put their subsequent history in a story,
So we can compare later between art and history,
What do you say?

PETRONIUS: Done. But you will have to give me first
A leave of absence from the court. You know
I never could work in a noisy, dusty Rome.
You'll have to banish me to my Tuscan villa!

NERO: You shall go. For as long as you like.
Put them in a book, Arbiter, try and trace their fate;
So we will watch life at work and smile.
Old friend, we will have two forms of art to compare,
Reality and illusion, you in words and I in life.
So we will be the masters of life at last,
The heroes of the Roman destiny!

PETRONIUS: Well said; so I shall begin with her escape to Scythia,
And the sealed orders Fabius must open on the road south.
Yes, it has its points as a story. Definitely.

NERO: I will do my part; it will be exciting to see
What happens on paper and in life. Eh? Life and art, the twins!
You are a marvel, Arbiter. If they *are* the same,
I shall know that life can be art after all.
What a relief that would be!

*(*NERO *sighs.)*

PETRONIUS: Who knows? They may be. I will base my predictions
On human weakness and my Emperor's magnanimity.

NERO: Oh yes, I am magnanimous.

PETRONIUS: Of course you are.

NERO: Otherwise there would be no point in being a God.

*(*NERO *yawns.)*

The dawn is breaking. I'm sleepy, Arbiter.
I'll take Sporus in before he takes a chill.
Come, my child, my little partridge, come wife . . .
Good night, Arbiter.

PETRONIUS: Good night, my Emperor.

(Exit NERO *and* SPORUS. *After an interval enter* FLAVIA, *cloaked. She sits down in silence at the table.)*

FLAVIA: Well?

*(*PETRONIUS *pushes his glass to her. She drinks, shivers, puts it down.)*

Did you succeed, Uncle?

PETRONIUS: I do not know yet. I have planted the seeds
You gave me. Perhaps they will flower as you wish.
You want them both destroyed, don't you?

(He sighs.)

FLAVIA: Yes.

PETRONIUS: This way, they are likely to be; it's a hard thing, Flavia.
Do you hate Fabius so much, after all? Unto death?

FLAVIA: Unto death. But I want the child free and the family
Honor unimpaired, preserved for his succession.

PETRONIUS: Well. We shall see. Be patient awhile about the child.
I have accused Nero of magnanimity; there is nothing quite
So useful as to accuse people of virtues they have not.
I will return the charge later . . . Hm.

FLAVIA: Before you go away—please! Don't forget me.

PETRONIUS: Of course, my dearest niece. I only wanted to warn you
I may not be long for this world myself. But you know that.

FLAVIA: Uncle!

PETRONIUS: Despina and I resolved—O years ago now—not to outlive each other.
She is ill with the lingering sickness, for how long
Nobody knows; she herself thinks for about a year more.

FLAVIA: But Uncle, you never meet, never see her.

PETRONIUS: There is no need; we write to each other daily.
We are eternally present in each other's minds.
The happiest married couple in all the Empire!

FLAVIA: Do not mock yourself so.

PETRONIUS: There is only ironic truth, no other variety.
When she dies, it will be as if some old moss-grown aqueduct
Up there in the hills of the mind had snapped,
And all the Roman fountains suddenly ceased playing.
Poor Despina! I shall go back to the villa to write a story
In the time that is left us. Flavia,
I feel you are wrong to hate so much.
Not morally, you understand, but somehow artistically.
There is an obscure connection between the act and wish
Which needs care in handling; one can damage oneself,
One can give a whole world blood poisoning.

FLAVIA: I do not understand you, Uncle.

PETRONIUS: No. It is badly expressed. Kiss me and go to bed, now.
It is late and I am weary.

(Exit FLAVIA. *The dawn breaks as* PETRONIUS *sits motionless.)*

SCENE TWO

A house in Brundisium. ACTE *is walking up and down dictating to* EIRON.

EIRON: And so it is agreed.

ACTE: Yes. That is all. But add "In the Queen's name"—
It will give it urgency; and "on active service," as the Romans do.

EIRON: Do you think you are leaving yourself enough time, madam?
The full moon is seven days off—

ACTE: To reach the Obelisk of Semiramis? Of course, Eiron.

EIRON: Amar has sent you the gift of a white mare,
And a costly ring for your marriage to him.

(He turns over the scrolls.)

Now here is the message about the transport:
They are sending a merchant barque, a big one.
It will lie up off the Cape of Doubt tomorrow night.
We can slip away in darkness and row out . . .
I must say I am puzzled; everything has been so easy,

It's almost suspicious. Nobody stopping us on the roads.
It's almost uncanny. Here we are in the heart of
A Roman camp . . . no roads patrolled, no houses examined.
If the Romans knew we were here . . . *Can* they not know?

ACTE: Yes it is uncanny; but destiny must have dreamed it so;
And why not, after all? History is waiting for us, for me.
We are its servants and its motors. It is powerless without us.

(A knock without)

That will be my nurse. See to it, will you?

(Exit EIRON. *Enter* GALBA.)

Who?

GALBA: Galba, my lady, your watchful Galba.

ACTE: Did you find your friend at home?

GALBA: Yes. The reports are true; there are two legions
Four others are standing by outside the walls.
In the town, refitting for active service.
They are bound for Scythia. Their general—
Can you guess?—is to be Fabius. He has been here three days.

ACTE: Fabius! How the wheel turns. You prophesied this once.

GALBA: I suppose he has been sent to redeem his credit
By conquering Scythia. An unlucky choice for us.

ACTE: Do you imagine so?

GALBA: How should I not?

ACTE: He would win no more honors there. No.
Besides, for all we know, he may be bound for Egypt.

GALBA: I have seen the sailing orders, madam.

ACTE: This time we are a match for him, at any rate.

GALBA: This brings me to another thing I wished to tell you.
Beloved Queen, I have come to say good-bye, to take my leave.

ACTE: Galba!

GALBA: I ask your permission humbly to retire. I planned it
Long ago, and this would seem the best moment.

ACTE: My Galba, what has come over you?

GALBA: Yes, my lady. I hope you will not count it a desertion.
My mind was long made up. Many reasons prompted me
And prompt me still; but the chief is that I am old,
Getting old, and tired. I have been preparing a small
Villa and orchard on the coast near Carthage for years
Against retirement. Now I feel the weariness enough
To pluck up courage from it and ask you for your leave.

ACTE: Are you so weary, then? Of Scythia, Galba?

GALBA: Of everything, if I must tell the truth.
I see so little hope ahead, madam, to be frank again;
I see a black outlook for three things—Scythia,
And Fabius the general, and yourself. There is
No issue to the matter. And I cannot bear to live
In devastated provinces among the dead and dying again.
Then another, smaller reason: a professional one, so to speak.
I betrayed your confidence to the Lady Flavia.
Since then I have not been happy in my post.
I believe in your inmost self you are not either,
But your great tact and kindness sealed your lips.
No, I want a few years at peace, to examine my mind
And put my affairs in order. To reflect on death.

ACTE: It is final, then?

GALBA: Yes, my dear, it is; tomorrow night at dusk
I'll see you to your ship, kiss hands, and leave you.

ACTE: What can I say? How can I thank you for the past?
O Galba, I am truly sorry, I shall miss you.

*(*GALBA *bows.)*

It is my loss, not yours. But so it must be.

(Enter EIRON.)

EIRON: The man in the cloak who was asking for you—
It is the general himself, Fabius, madam.

ACTE: How does he know we are here?

EIRON: I cannot tell. But he knows. He is below stairs.
Madam, do not receive him; he is armed.
Under his cloak I saw a short sword or a dirk.
Imagine if he should try to kill you here.
Be wise and refuse to receive him, madam.

ACTE: I do not think Fabius would do such a thing. He's a Roman.

GALBA: It would be an excellent idea from a soldier's point of view.

ACTE: I do not believe he would. Never.

EIRON: Madam, we are at war with Rome—do you forget?

ACTE: Not for an instant. No, but if he knows we are here,
It might be better to admit it freely; at least, Eiron,
To find out what he knows and feels. Otherwise, who knows
What might come about? He would have the power to arrest us;
That would be equally disastrous for Scythia.
But I will see him. Eiron, give me a sword too.
We will be matched! The new sword, the long one!

EIRON: Do not tempt fate, madam.

ACTE: I cannot influence it now—don't you see?
Yes. I shall see Fabius. Tell him to come here.
Thank you. And leave me alone, please, to meet him.

*(*GALBA *gives her a sword.* EIRON *and*
GALBA *exit. She holds the sword behind her.)*

Strange that I never regret my eyes except when Fabius comes.

(Enter FABIUS.)

FABIUS: Acte.

ACTE: Fabius.

FABIUS: Beloved, they are sending me to destroy you.

ACTE: I know it. This time you will not succeed.
O Fabius, I am afraid for you, my love.

FABIUS: I do not want to mock your hopes, but they are groundless;
You will find nothing you expect in Scythia
But dissension, mutinies, mismanagement, and—failure.
My intelligence is good. Dearest, be warned.

ACTE: All the more reason for my presence, then;
I will unite them in a single will.

FABIUS: Listen to me; they have given me six legions, six heavies.
Within the month we shall have crossed into Scythia.
Gods, I have not slept for weeks for thinking of it.
Turning round and round like a rat in a cage,
Not daring to see you, hoping and fearing.
At last we have had this chance to meet.

ACTE: And did you come to kill me—to kill Scythian hopes of me?

(Throws sword on table.)

FABIUS: Yes, even that, in a way; no. Yes, though, yes.
I am going out of my mind. I brought a sword,
I brought a poison ring; in all these odious and tragic
Choices I thought you might die with me.
Acte, before it is too late, abdicate.
I will send you into Egypt. Let us fly together.
Anything! Anything!

(Throws sword on table. ACTE *laughs.)*

ACTE: Embrace me instead. Harder. Harder . . .
Fabius, does my face show how much I am changed?
Surely you feel it in my embrace, a strange emphasis
That is not fear, not despair? Beloved Fabius,
Something has altered in me—can you guess what?
Scythia! I am a Queen now, I crouch no longer
Under the whiplash of events; destiny guides a Queen.
Those mysterious imperatives I inherited
In the hour of my birth—I only understand them now.
An apple tree cannot bear roses. It is not in nature.
It is so wonderful to comprehend at last, such a relief.
Of course, the old heartbreak will be always there—
My love for you—and nothing changes that. Yet, yet,
I am stronger than myself, as strong as Scythia now.
Memories of my father, of Metanira my sister hover over me,
The old hurts, the old remembered caresses like wounds!
I must be true to them now; even though I shall never be
As great as my sister—my father was right to prefer her,
Even though it made me suffer; I knew he was right.
I was nothing to her; her eyes were so dazzlingly beautiful
That I was glad to lose my own and with them all comparisons.
But now I am in her place I must not falter.

FABIUS: Ah, no. No. There must be something to be done,
Something to change the pattern of this grotesque misfortune.

ACTE: Is duty no more use to you as a shield against life?
It is my only refuge now, and Scythia's.

FABIUS: Duty!

(He laughs.)

ACTE: It would have been so once.

FABIUS: Self-indulgence! You talk like an actress.
What of a soldier crushed by the excesses
Of lies, of a tissue of foolish lies? Lies!
Duty! Honor! Emperor!

(He spits.)

That for your duty. It is my child that rules me.
That is what hurts me here in all of this.
And you, Acte, you.

ACTE: Simon the Magician called us star-crossed once,
But I wonder if he saw this chapter.
You will have the child back safe and sound, Fabius;
You will get him back somehow. I know it.

FABIUS: I thought at first to make a pact with you,
To poison a wine cup so at least we might die
Tranquilly in each other's arms; or if not,
To run you through the body and then myself. . . .
Gods, Gods. A Roman solution, at least.

ACTE: What would that solve? It would belittle fate.
Besides, our common guilt would be assumed.
No, at the first full moon my generals will meet me
At the Obelisk of Semiramis; they will drink the Queen's blood
From the gold crater, they will swear and kneel.

Scythia, Fabius, Scythia—that is all I have left.
Already the sixth legion is reeling under their blows;
Already you, my only and enduring love, seem faded;
You whose kisses were once brief punishments for longing
Are to become part of this terrible pageant.

(FABIUS pours wine with shaking hands. Drinks and laughs harshly.)

FABIUS: How differently things turn out; I had thought
You would have greeted our death with rapture—
That, dying, I would recite the epitaph of Semiramis
Until we fell asleep. *Gelden buk var; gelden vien dirralim.*

ACTE: No. Don't. Don't!

FABIUS: You cannot have forgotten it? *Vien dirralim akbar.*

ACTE: You must not speak Scythian. No. I will not have it.
It will destroy everything, everything, Fabius!

FABIUS: *Akbar el kasim casimir.*

ACTE: No! No!

FABIUS: What does it matter now? Who will endure
To be worthy of her? We are the trash of history
In a rotten Empire staggering to its doom.
Ah, but with a knifestroke I could cut the girths
And set the wild horse free. O I must not forget.
Please give Amar this ring and tell him
That with it I repudiate his kinship.
We are free now to spill each other's blood.
Acte! is this all you have to say?

ACTE: Give me to drink. My ears are buzzing. My throat
Is parched. Fabius . . . I know why you hesitate,
I know the thoughts which cross your mind.
But you will not do it; I know that too. Poison
Would solve nothing for us. Let me drink.
Look, I pledge you in the old fashion.
"In wine marches courage," says the Scythian poet,
"In wine walks love." Come pledge me also, Fabius,
For who can tell when next we'll meet, if ever,
Or in what marble silence or chilly kiss we'll greet?
How nobly history plans, but how sadly;
A great mansion with many, many doors,
And we small people, the heroes of the action,
Like the inhabitants of a doll's house. Who invented us?
Why are we here? Whither shall we vanish?

(FABIUS sits at table.)

Yes, we can oppose history, bend history,
But only human duty dare stare history in the face!
Love by it we must, live by it we must;
There are no options taken out with fate.
"Smoothly run the course of the sword"—I am quoting again—
"Easily breaks the heart." How sweet to hear the Scythian tongue
Upon your lips again. I could not bear it.
Fabius, you must leave me now, my dear.

(She touches his shoulders.)

Embrace me as a keepsake. Never forget.

(Exit FABIUS. She stands. Enter the NURSE.)

NURSE: He has left, madam. They have bolted the gate now.
We will be safe from intrusion.
The ambassadors from Amar have arrived
With the marriage gifts.

ACTE: Admit them. I am ready for them.

SCENE THREE

Four Roman staff officers, AGRICOLA, BALBUS, ARGO, *and* GENERAL FABIUS, *are watching a military action in Scythia by night. They are on an eminence, under a tree, some seated on stools. A primitive bivouac is at one side of the stage with a mattress of leaves. The whole skyline is a leaping, dancing mass of flames. The Army has set fire to the corn. There is a good deal of movement in the background,* SOLDIERS *hurrying about, lines of* PRISONERS *coming in, et cetera.* FABIUS *is seated on a stool, drinking wine.*

FABIUS: Well, by dawn we should know something definite.

AGRICOLA: I don't see how they can hold; they *must* surrender.

FABIUS: Fire is a great tactician, Nephew, when you use it well.
It saves you men and saddles and pikes. And casualties.

BALBUS: Ah! but this battle plan was one of genius.

FABIUS: Thank you! But it is simply copybook in corn or wheat country,
Particularly in parched uplands like these.

AGRICOLA: It's surprising the Scythians did not anticipate it;
If they had crossed the river instead of entrenching
Up there by the Obelisk, we'd have lost them again.

FABIUS: They foresee nothing.

AGRICOLA: It's moving east now quite fast, Uncle.

FABIUS: Is the legion following up?

AGRICOLA: Yes, in line ahead.

BALBUS: This is how farmers hunt rats in corn. If the wind stays firm—

AGRICOLA: The other end is going up now. Look!

BALBUS: We can pack up and go home; they are surrounded!

AGRICOLA: Probably choked to death by smoke. Hullo! Prisoners.

(A line of PRISONERS *passes. Enter a* SOLDIER.)

AGRICOLA: What is it, Sergeant?

SOLDIER: The third is in line now, and closing in to support;
You should just see—

FABIUS: What should we just see?

SOLDIER: Pheasants, hares, goats, deer—every blessed thing imaginable.

FABIUS: I hope they are getting on with the maneuver
And not hunting for the pot, Sergeant.
I know it's a great temptation, but the legion
Was not sent here to hunt hares.

SOLDIER: No, sir.

AGRICOLA: They've had better luck than the seventh;
They ran into snakes on the river marsh—huge ones,
And poisonous. There have been casualties.

SOLDIER: Why, on our side the hares are surrendering like Scythians;
When they reach the river, they light a red signal.

BALBUS: They have! There she is! All right, man,
Back to line with you, and remember the order:
Halt upon the river and dig in till dawn.

SOLDIER: Very good, sir.

BALBUS: The ring is complete!

(He rubs his hands.)

AGRICOLA: More prisoners coming in.

FABIUS: How forlorn they look—cavalrymen unhorsed. It's a good sign.

AGRICOLA: Amar must have lost his horses in the stampede.
Hullo! the western end has started; a white signal.

FABIUS: Well, that's it. Keep an eye out for a truce flag, remember.
I hope the wind stays firm.

AGRICOLA: It will, Uncle.

FABIUS: As for me, I'm going to sleep awhile. Ouf! This Scythian wine
Is heavy stuff, like an opiate. As for you two,
I want you to go down to forward positions on the wings
And plan the assault at dawn; we must be on them
Before they can recover from the confusion of the fire.

BALBUS: Very well. Come, Agricola. Race you to the horses.

(Exeunt AGRICOLA *and* BALBUS. FABIUS *drinks more wine. He is obviously dazed with fatigue. He walks slowly and unsteadily, though he is not drunk. He makes up a bed in the bivouac and starts to remove his armor slowly, with pauses. He lies down. The stage darkens, though the fires still leap and smoke. He sighs and is about to sleep when all of a sudden he is up on one elbow, all attention. The figure of* AMAR *materializes as if by magic a few paces from him.* FABIUS *grabs his sword and waits.)*

AMAR: So once again we meet, Cousin.

FABIUS: I was wondering when you'd come, Amar.

AMAR: We meet under the white flag of truce, Cousin.

FABIUS: I knew you would be forced to surrender sooner or later.

AMAR: Surrender, Cousin? Wait! I have come to treat with you,
As general to general. We know we can trust
Your Roman magnanimity. O yes! Always, always!

FABIUS: It is too late.

AMAR: It is never too late.

FABIUS: What have you to offer? What have you come to say?

AMAR: Cousin, I have come—

FABIUS: I am not your cousin.

AMAR: I have come to offer you a treaty—a new treaty,
A solemn treaty with the new Scythia!

FABIUS: Too late. Years too late, Amar.

AMAR: Our position is a bad one; I admit it. Yes, it is.
You have destroyed the whole of the harvest.
What kind of war is that, Cousin? What kind of war?

FABIUS: The only kind you understand; who destroyed the bridges?

AMAR: You cannot eat bridges. Corn is another thing.
What will the Scythian people do this winter?

FABIUS: Amar, I accept your complete surrender now.
All arms to be grounded and piled as from dawn.
Otherwise, my legions assault. That is my last word.

AMAR: Wait. Wait. I did not come to talk of surrender.
I have come from Acte, Cousin, from Acte herself,
My wife and queen now, Cousin. She sent me to treat.

FABIUS: I can accept no treaty; absolute surrender of you both—

AMAR: She has changed very much, Cousin, so very much.

FABIUS: *Stop calling me Cousin!*

AMAR: General, then. She has changed very much since she came
Back into Scythia—to the throne. So very much.
She asks you humbly for a treaty.

FABIUS: I have my orders, Amar. I also want something.

AMAR: Anything in our power, naturally, anything at all.

FABIUS: I want the head of Acte.

AMAR: Now listen, great general, protector of the poor,
Light of justice and mercy to the humble, exemplar
Of truth and magnanimity and justice—

FABIUS: The head of Acte, do you hear me?

AMAR: O my general, my general! You make things so difficult
For us all, for Scythia, even for yourselves the Romans.
Consider again. Acte is pregnant, General; she is waiting
For a child, her child, my son, General. She has changed much.
You would not recognize her; she wants peace for Scythia.

*(*FABIUS *walks up and down, obviously disturbed by the news. He drinks some more wine.* AMAR *watches him closely.)*

A true, a lasting peace, founded upon her son.
Surely that is not too much to ask a Roman?
The Scythians are not bad-hearted people.
You know that, you know that well, General.
You understand how friendly, tolerant and easygoing
We are; you know that we make good friends and faithful ones.
A treaty would be honored to the letter. Look,
We could supply a cavalry corps for Rome.
Or . . . double the grain tribute, if you wish.
We ask only a fair basis for negotiation,
For old times sake, General, for old times sake!

FABIUS: No.

AMAR: You must believe me.

FABIUS: Absolutely no.

AMAR: Then your final word is . . .?

FABIUS: Bring me her head—and save your own, Amar.

AMAR: My own?

FABIUS: You heard me clearly enough.

AMAR: Save my own head? But General, surely—

FABIUS: There is no argument to be continued between us.
I am under strict imperial orders here.
I am Rome now, Amar; you must realize it.
Duty and destiny have become a single thing.

AMAR: That is your last word?

FABIUS: It must be—don't you see?

AMAR: And no consideration for Scythia or for Acte
Will move you now?

FABIUS: None.

AMAR: Then I must think . . . It is bitterly disappointing. . . .
We had hopes in you. Who could believe that we should
Live to reproach Fabius our friend? I can hardly believe it.

*(*AMAR *thinks deeply, with bent head. Then he raises it and the two men stare at each other for a long moment. Suddenly* AMAR *shakes* FABIUS *by the shoulders as if to awaken him and speaks in a strangled voice.)*

Fabius! Fabius! Consider what you ask!

*(*FABIUS, *white, shakes his head.* AMAR *looks wildly about him and then gives a sob. He melts into the darkness.* FABIUS *stands irresolutely for a long moment. Then he turns suddenly, as if he had reconsidered his decision.)*

FABIUS: Amar! Wait!

(There is no answer. FABIUS *lifts his sword and lops a branch from the tree. It falls at his feet. He touches it with his foot and remains staring at it.)*

SCENE FOUR

A room in a country villa far from Rome. PETRONIUS *is seated at a marble-topped table with his arms bare and spread before him. A* BARBER *with a case of razors stands over him, taking a keen professional interest in the incisions he has made in the wrists. The scene is played in a completely matter-of-fact tone of voice. The two men might be playing chess.* PETRONIUS *reaches for a goblet of wine which stands beside a bottle on the marble table. The* BARBER *catches his hand.*

BARBER: Ah, no! Try and keep them as still as possible. Let me!
You'll spoil my handiwork. There!

(He gives PETRONIUS *a drink, holding the goblet to his lips. The patient drinks, and sighs with pleasure.)*

PETRONIUS: What is better than the good red wine of one's own vineyard?
Have some yourself, surgeon. Blood of Tuscany, they call it!

BARBER: No, thank you, not yet.

PETRONIUS: Come, man. Help me to celebrate the new vintage.
This year the harvest was exceptional, magnificent.
We must drink the old wine to honor the new,
Last year's child to honor the newly born one, no?
You take your job too seriously, much too seriously.

(He gestures.)

BARBER: It is no good unless you stay relatively still, sir.
See, the lateral incisions are very fine.
The blood comes slowly, but nevertheless, if you move —

PETRONIUS: What — if I move. What can happen?

BARBER: You will quicken the flow unduly. Be patient, sir.
You do not want to die untowardly, suddenly, all at once,
Like a sacrificial ox with its windpipe slit?

PETRONIUS: What! And ruin by one vulgar slip of the knife
A lifetime's reputation for measure and elegance?
Of course I don't. Everything is measure. I should have you whipped

BARBER: Quite. Then be ruled by me. Have confidence, sir.
In this way you will last till midnight, as you wish.

PETRONIUS: The moon is full tonight — a harvest moon.
The first warm chill of autumn will have touched the air.
This is the season I love the most of all.

BARBER: Yes.

PETRONIUS: I feel the enormous weight of mortality
Lifted from my heart, the full wine cup
Of human experience running over. Tester there!

(Enter TESTER.*)*

How goes that banquet, will you tell me?

TESTER: The wine is circulating, master, the second jar.

PETRONIUS: Already? That is good work. But then my friends were always
Loyal and ardent ones.

TESTER: Your guests are happy. All will be well.

PETRONIUS: Open the outer doors, will you? I want to hear
The laughter as the wine rises in their voices
To bloom in conversation, the play of anecdote and wit!
Let me hear them laugh! Life can be so rich at times!

TESTER: Yes, master.

(Exit TESTER.*)*

PETRONIUS: When does the bath come, surgeon? I am anxious
For the luxury of lying down. My bones are old, you know.

BARBER: A little later. All in good time, sir.
The water is heating now. Let me massage the arms a little,
So you do not feel a cramp. So.

PETRONIUS: That's better. Another drink, my friend. I want to toast
Some old memories.

BARBER: Very well. Stay still, sir.

(The BARBER *gives* PETRONIUS *another drink.)*

PETRONIUS: The Blood of Tuscany! Drops sacred to Adonis.
Have some blood, surgeon — some *real* blood. Aha!

BARBER: Later; when I have settled you down in the bath, sir.

PETRONIUS: You are too serious, man.You will get on in your profession, I fea

BARBER: It is a somewhat delicate business, sir,
To arrange for the perfect death. In fact, if I
May say so, it partakes of art. Don't think me
Presumptuous, but I have never disappointed a gentleman yet.
I have always given satisfaction.

(A tremendous burst of laughter from the banquet without.)

PETRONIUS: Aha! Good! Good!

(More laughter.)

They are gathering speed; the sails are filling.
A harvest banquet is always the best of the year.
Well, my affairs are all in order, like the vineyards!
Ah . . . that hurt me a little; for the first time.

BARBER: I cut a little more deeply, to open the way.
Your age makes the blood slower, sir.

PETRONIUS: Well, I am in your hands, great artist!

BARBER: Shall I call for some poetry to be spoken?
Or for a philosopher to amuse your mind
With some conundrums of geometry or science?

PETRONIUS: No.

BARBER: That is how many gentlemen prefer it.

PETRONIUS: I always had simple tastes.

BARBER: So long as you do not become despondent, sir.
Some gentlemen have regrets, leaving their friends behind.

PETRONIUS: I have everything to gain and nothing to mourn;
I shall leave nobody behind to really care,
And I shall find somebody who does in that quiet valley
With its wintry vineyards and ghostly olive trees.
I only regret that I am so impatient.
You must excuse me . . .

BARBER: You will get into the rhythm in a while.
But it must go slowly with the maximum of style.

PETRONIUS: You are right! Style is the word. That is what the world lacks!

(Enter a SLAVE.*)*

What is it, Audio? We are busy.

SLAVE: Your niece has arrived, sir.

PETRONIUS: My niece! Damnation! Flavia!
Why on earth should she come after so long,
At such a time? She must not see me like this.

BARBER: Do not fear. I'll bind you, sir.

PETRONIUS: No. I won't see her. Why should I see her?

BARBER: But this is a family tie, sir. You know you must.
As a gentleman, you must follow form.

(PETRONIUS groans.)

Leave it to me. I can slow it down.

PETRONIUS: Yes, you are right. I must. Give me a drink, then.

BARBER: Give us a few moments before admitting her.

(Exit SLAVE. *The* BARBER *binds up the wrists of* PETRONIUS *and wipes down the table with a sponge.)*

There, you see? It was quite easy. Everything is proper.
There is no cause for alarm.

(Laughter from the banquet. Enter FLAVIA.*)*

PETRONIUS: Welcome, dear niece.

FLAVIA: Uncle.

PETRONIUS: We did not expect you.

FLAVIA: I heard that Despina was dead. I hurried from Rome.
O my uncle, must you really make this choice?

PETRONIUS: Need I answer you? You look upon a happy man, Flavia!
Let us have no long faces, my dear. You did not come
To spoil everything and throw death into disarray?

(A burst of laughter. FLAVIA *winces.)*

FLAVIA: What is that?

PETRONIUS: A harvest banquet in honor of the new wine.
Thirty of the biggest drunkards in all Tuscany
Have come to feast my leave of absence in the old style.

FLAVIA: Is there nothing I can do for you?

PETRONIUS: For me, nothing; for yourself, a great deal.
You have your life to live as yet, my dear.

FLAVIA: What life?

PETRONIUS: How do you mean—"what life?"? Wretched creature!

FLAVIA: Do you know nothing, then? Is it possible?
All the months you have been here without news?

PETRONIUS: You know what country life is. Besides, I hate news.

FLAVIA: Acte? Fabius?

PETRONIUS: Has something happened to them all?

FLAVIA: It is incredible that you should not know.

PETRONIUS: Darling, wait! I have been dealing with them on paper.
Art is not life, and life was not my concern.
I have finished their story in my book; that is enough.
There, I know what happened; it did not fall out as I first planned.
I became indulgent to them. She abdicated and fled with him.
They lived in exile and disgrace in Egypt, banished both.
A new dimension opened in their love. They were penniless
But together. They forged a new life of hardships. Yes.
So a child was born, and Acte —

(A burst of laughter.)

FLAVIA: Ah, you are mocking me!

PETRONIUS: No. I swear it! I am recounting my book to you!

FLAVIA: You could not do it if you knew the truth.

PETRONIUS: Tell me the truth, then. It must have fallen out
As you planned it. Did the trap not work? Both dead?

FLAVIA: Bid the surgeon go.

PETRONIUS: Will the bandages hold?

BARBER: Yes, sir. For a while. But not too long.

PETRONIUS: Leave us a while together.

BARBER: Very well, sir.

(Exit BARBER.*)*

PETRONIUS: What is the truth, Flavia?

(A burst of laughter. FLAVIA *covers her ears. Then she gets up and walks about.)*

What of Acte?

FLAVIA: She is dead.

PETRONIUS: Of course; one could see she would lose her life.
Scythia gaped before her like an open furnace.
Bactrian horses! Longer swords! What did you expect?
So the plan worked after all! You should be happy, at least.

FLAVIA: She thought the Romans could be beaten by a handful
Of dreamy peasants from a bog, spouting poetry.
You were right — people will tempt their fate.

PETRONIUS: Of course; one could see she would lose her life
In some thoughtless and tragic pageant. She belonged to art!
A flourish of Scythian despair and joy was her portion.
But that is how it should be; what have you to regret?
You wanted it so. I could see it written on your face.

FLAVIA: Yes. I did want it so.

PETRONIUS: And what of Fabius?

FLAVIA: He defeated them quite easily, as you guessed he would.
They would not submit, the young generals and the Queen.
They retreated for the final battle to the great
Obelisk of Semiramis. They died. Acte was cut down with them.
And Fabius accomplished his imperial task.
In a way, it was like the final humiliation.
Indeed, almost more like one of your stories than reality;
He cut her head off and carried it back to Rome.

PETRONIUS: So *he* did not die? The plan went wrong!

FLAVIA: Wait. His campaign has made him rich and famous,
Cherished and beloved. All our properties have been
Restored again, and the family credit. Everything!

PETRONIUS: Bravo! That is something.

FLAVIA: Yes, but it crushed him. It crushed Fabius, Uncle.
The fame he bought at such a price. He has become now
A hopeless drunkard; he will never hold a command again.
Probably he will die. He has destroyed himself.

PETRONIUS: Hum! That is a twist I would not have foreseen; how cunning
Life is. Art limps behind it, trying to catch up.
No, I would have put it to you another way,
Altogether closer to life as well as to art.
I should say that when she got back she found
Her deception complete, the Scythian forces in complete
Disarray, mutinous and dispersed; disorganized.
All the money had been wasted on useless arms
Or embezzled by the tribal chiefs. Despair
Entered her heart. Yet she could not look back.
Do you see what I mean? She married Amar and tried
To cement the tribes together for the revolt.
Then she discovered to her horror that her father
Had been poisoned by him. Wait. Let me go on.
He had been old and irresolute; the tribal kings
Pressed Amar for action, drove him to declare the revolt.
He had to act; he was between two forces.
The whole business went off awry....
Give me a drink, Flavia.

(He drinks deeply, sighs.)

And then, as the final touch, you could have
Amar betray her; he cut off her head to save his own....
You look impatient. I am only writing in my head.

FLAVIA: We do not know for certain.

PETRONIUS: We will never know for certain. Yet I am sure
That is how it was, in art if not in life.
But at least the child was restored to you
As I said it would be? That at least came right?

FLAVIA: Yes.

PETRONIUS: Well?

FLAVIA: The child is mad, Uncle, after what he endured.
He is just as beautiful, only now he is mad.

PETRONIUS: Mad! But this is sheer genius!

FLAVIA: He can only repeat, over and over again, a single phrase:
"Heroism is divine. My father is a God." Over and over again.

PETRONIUS: My father is a God! How limited the human imagination is!
The catalogue of human pain is fathomless. We try to
Circumscribe it with our poems and stories. Mad!
Flavia, embrace me! How terrible beauty is!

*(*FLAVIA *flies into his arms and sinks slowly to the ground until she is kneeling.)*

And so at last we see her naked, Life!
Stripped to the somber quick of truth,
The chemist of our own desires and fears.
So much sweetness coats the poisoned fruit....
So things close in on us at last, the great
Houses fall into disrepair and ruin, guilts
Rust the blood, invade the guiltless nerves.
Slowly the fountains pause, the nightingales cease
Murmuring; the chapter ending will begin another....
And you, Flavia? You have lived so much, yes,
But you have never *worked* at life, never once.
Said "Yes" to life, "Yes" and again "Yes."
Like all of us, you have connived with time.
One day you will see that death is not merely
To be "died" but to be *achieved.* Despina
Taught me that; I simply pass the message on.
Yes it *is* possible to become an adept of reality.

(A burst of laughter from the banquet. Enter the BARBER.*)*

BARBER: It is time, sir.

PETRONIUS: I know. The bandages are slipping.

BARBER: The bath is ready.

*(*PETRONIUS *motions to the* BARBER *to be silent. He strokes the head of* FLAVIA.*)*

PETRONIUS: You remember the stories I used to tell you as a child?
The fables of heroes and giants and lovers? Well!
I will tell you one now if you will help me.
Come and sit beside me, Flavia, will you?
There is one story I have never told a living soul:
I have been saving it for you for a long time. Come with me!

(The BARBER *undoes the bandages; a burst of laughter.)*

Life is so good when it is leading somewhere.
Come, dry your tears, child, and hear my story.

(They help him to his feet and lead him slowly off.)

CURTAIN

THE TORONTO SCENE

by Mordecai Richler

Toronto is the sort of place where small, intense theatrical groups erupt, lose their money, and fizzle—all in a season. Some produce original Canadian works of merit. Others, like the House of Hambourg, reach out for off-Broadway successes like "The Connection." But in that company's ill-advised production, the play was reset to take place in Toronto. Unfortunately, all those nice local kids didn't seem to feel or look right in a pad. It was a case of good Canadian breeding triumphing over New York depravity. For even as the boys waited for their fix, and were most abusive to the bourgeois audience, they were never so thoughtless as to flick their cigarette ashes on the floor. Always they sought an ash tray.

Influences

In a city where American and British influences still contend, a spirit that one might call truly Canadian has yet to emerge. The trouble with Toronto is that, while all the trappings of a capital are there, it is not a true capital, and all the longing and nationalistic fervor in Canada will not make it one. It's the farm club. Young actors, directors, and writers drift to Toronto to gather experience, and many, as soon as they decently can, move on to assault London or New York. This has led to a certain dichotomy of feeling about those who have departed. Canada is North America's minority country, Toronto its English-speaking cultural center, and the predominant attitude is analogous to an older, more familiar Jewish one. When one of our own, for instance, makes it in New York we are proud: he has been accepted by the gentiles. But we are resentful too, because it appears that he has sold out. Again, like the Jews, we sometimes see the world through an inverted telescope. A touching end-of-the-year headline in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* read, 1960 WAS GOOD YEAR FOR PLAYWRIGHTS FROM OUTSIDE OF CANADA.

Maybe. But, all the same, we are clearly determined to protect Canadian playwrights and other artists—if only because they're our very own. The touchy defense of our national culture against the barbarians to the south is gathering spleen quickly, and sometimes, I must say, it takes a delightful turn. Not long ago, it was comic-strip hero Steve Canyon who came in for abuse. When Canyon was temporarily stationed at a United States Air Force base in northern Canada two winters ago, he was dropped from the daily comic pages of the Peterborough (Ontario) *Examiner;* he still appears weekly in the Saturday supplement. An editorial that appeared on March 9, 1960, explained, "For several months we have been disturbed by the political implications of the *Steve Canyon* strip. The hero and his friends were on what was obviously Canadian soil, but it seemed to be entirely under the domination of American troops, who were there as first-line defense against Russian encroachment." The syndicated answer to this type of insult came in the shape of two all-Canuck comic strips, Jeff Buchanon and Larry Brannon. Buchanon is not appearing at present, but Brannon runs in sixty-six Canadian newspapers. But neither, to show you the sort of stuff *we're* made of up here, has ever run down the United States. Instead, Messrs. Buchanon and Brannon have moved about "glamorizing the face of Canada." (In his first adventure, Brannon visited "Toronto, focus of the future, channel for the untold wealth of the north, communications center of a vast, rich hinterland, metropolis of rare and precious metals.")

The worldly clubs

American and British influences are still undigested. They run to extremes in Toronto. There is, on the one side, an old man's cough of a club, the Arts and Letters Club, a colonial yearning for something like the Savage of London, with the prerequisite copies of "Punch" and the "Illustrated London News" on the long table, food strikingly reminiscent of British railways fare, and, as one member put it, "a chance for the old boys to dress up as female impersonators for the annual Christmas show." On the other side, there is the Bohemian Embassy, the pick of the would-be beat coffee bars. Milton Acorn, who describes himself as "the antisocial social poet," is one of the poets who has shown up to read his verse to Thursday night audiences. Although no liquor, not to say junk, is available at the Embassy, the proprietors have set down an empty vodka bottle on each checkered tablecloth that is, at least, suggestive of hip depravity. But Acorn's poems are not, as one might have expected them to be, abusive. In fact, the night I heard him he read a poem in the fine old Canadian style of Robert W. Service. Unfortunately, Acorn's work is not nearly so rich.

The CBC

A small, besieged island of good taste in the middle is nourished by the University of Toronto and, for the most part, employed by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Again and again, the publicly owned CBC, the cultural pride of the land, has been accused of being too highbrow and, in windier days, of sheltering Reds and homosexuals. All three charges are inaccurate. "Festival," the CBC's cultural showcase, is, if anything, sadly timid. Their interpretation of art is usually limited to the O.K. brand names, adaptations from Ibsen, Chekhov, and Miller, or, on a particularly daring night, some sexy Giraudoux. And although they feel superior to sponsor-ridden, agency-driven New York, there have been no Mosels or Chayefskys unearthed in the pure Presbyterian air of Toronto. Ironically, too, the Toronto viewer can often see a better production of, say, Shaw on an American channel (some of them are received in Canada), with a post-graduate Canadian either in the lead or directing.

The closest thing to a regular Canadian theater in Toronto is the Crest. Miraculously, it is just about to celebrate its eighth birthday. The Crest is the creation of one of Toronto's best-known theatrical families, the Davises. To begin with, there were Donald, Murray, and their sister, Barbara Chilcott. But Donald, since his off-Broadway success in "Krapp's Last Tape," works out of New York, and Miss Chilcott, more appreciated in London, now appears only rarely in Toronto. So only Murray Davis remains. He is, at present, not only in charge of production for the forty-week season at the Crest, but is also its administrator and artistic director. He says it costs him $6,500 a week to run a play, and, the usual run being for four weeks, he can just make out—and is often glad to—on half-filled houses. Not, mind you, because the choice of plays is daring or experimental. To the contrary. The usual Crest fare is cozy, commercial, and charmingly old-fashioned. But as Murray Davis sees it, he gives Canadian actors a stage platform and the opportunity to work under professional conditions. He can no longer afford to produce plays by Canadians, for the very sympathetic reason that the last two cost him $15,000 each. "The Toronto audience," he says, "is still not large or sophisticated enough. But the new O'Keefe Center has been surprisingly helpful. It's getting people away from their television sets. They are, we hope, beginning to form the theatergoing habit."

Biggest, best, and most

The mammoth O'Keefe Center, completed in the autumn of 1960 and seating 3,200, is Toronto's version of the biggest, the best, and the most in theaters; and, as that dazzled city will never forget, it was chosen for the opening of "Camelot." But some visitors to Toronto have been skeptical about the O'Keefe. Tyrone Guthrie, who is to Canadian theater what Kipling was to the Indian water-carrier, has said the O'Keefe is doomed to be "an artistic white elephant." His hope for Toronto is "that some inspired philanthropist will give the city a small repertory theater and leave it to one gifted director who won't be tied down to any one area of world drama."

Meanwhile, there's plenty of acting work available in Toronto, and by putting together appearances on television and radio plays, school broadcasts, and the occasional movie or stage bit, the competent performer can earn a good living. In the absence of a Sardi's or an Ivy, the theatrical buffs tend to gather in a private club across the street from the rickety old CBC radio building on Jarvis Street: the place is called (bracingly, I think) the Celebrity Club. Its rooms are tastefully, even handsomely done, and usually there's lots of pointed talk about those who have sold out to Broadway or the West End, but, to date, no heads have been shaved. From time to time, there's the rumor of some big American film producer coming to town to look at locations. He arrives, summons the press, and announces that Toronto is the most exciting city on the continent, baby, and just spilling over with talent. He doesn't say that the talent comes cheaper than in the United States or that his film will take only fourteen days to shoot.

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